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THE ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN UK

**RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN GLOBAL
MULTISTAKEHOLDER GROUPS**

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

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October2012.

Abstract

This doctoral thesis explores relational leadership in global multistakeholder groups. As a complete participant observer, I used grounded theory to investigate relational processes through which leadership is constructed, sustained and deconstructed within a global multistakeholder group. By a global multistakeholder group I mean a group made up of multistakeholder categories from different parts of the world. The research setting is situated within the ISO 26000 Working Group on Social Responsibility (WGSR). The study thereby fills a gap in the leadership literature insofar as there is no substantial body of academic literature on leadership processes within a global multistakeholder setting.

The majority of leadership studies have considered leadership from an entity perspective. This study examines leadership from a relational perspective. A relational perspective was more pertinent for such an informal setting with no rigid organisational structure and procedures. In the current thesis, leadership is recognised as a modified form of status (Uhl-Bien, 2006). From this perspective, relational processes are considered as leadership when the social influence that is generated contributes to the emergence of social order and new approaches, attitudes, and goals.

The findings show that consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups are significant organising acts and activities of leadership relational processes. Those acts contribute to the emergence, preservation and disbandment of leadership in a global multistakeholder group. The data also reveal the importance of consensus and delegation to groups in maintaining or destabilizing the social order within the setting. This research also offers a theory of delegation to groups in global multistakeholder settings which could be considered as a substantial contribution.

The outcomes of this study are a reference point for research on relational leadership in global multistakeholder groups. It is also intended to be a catalyst for more consideration of relational perspectives in leadership. Furthermore, it will enhance greater concern for cultural and regional diversity in the constitution of similar groups in the future. The major challenge has been around identifying the extent that relational processes constitute leadership. Moreover, studies about dynamic approaches such as relational perspectives are much harder to generalize from but possess greater potential for improving leadership theories and practices.

Dedicated to:

My mother Fatima Saadaoui,

Who always supported me all the way through the PhD process;

My father the late Ahmed Yaghfour;

Who always encouraged me to get a PhD and passed away before I even had started it.

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- Appendix 3: Extract from Bahrain Diary
- Appendix 4: Letters from Governments and Organisations

List of Abbreviations

ATTF	Arabic Translation Task Force
CAG	Chairman's Advisory Group
CD	Committee Draft
COPOLCO	ISO Committee on Consumer Policy
DIS	Draft International Standard
FDIS	Final Draft International Standard
FTTF	French Translation Task Force
IDTF	Integrated Drafting Task Force
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOE	International Organisation of Employers
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
ISO 26000 WGSR	ISO 26000 Working Group on Social Responsibility
ISO CS	ISO Central Secretariat
ISO DEVCO	ISO Committee for Developing Countries
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
LTF	Liaison Task Force
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
RGU	Robert Gordon University
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SMO	Small and Medium Organisations
SR	Social Responsibility
SSRO	Services, Support, Research, and Others
TG	Task Group
TG1, TG2, TG3	Strategic Task Groups
TG4, TG5, TG6	Standard Setting (or Content) Task Groups
TMB	Technical Management Board
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
WD	Working Draft

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to Chapter

This study explores leadership relational processes within a global multistakeholder group. Leadership is understood in this study as being socially constructed through acts and activities of organising. Organising acts and activities of leadership in this thesis are understood to be consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups. The research uses grounded theory to develop an understanding of leadership processes in a global multistakeholder group. Data was collected through a complete participant observation and field notes. Pierre Bourdieu's relational sociology, namely, his concepts of habitus, capital, field and practice, were used as a theoretical lens for this study.

A global multistakeholder group is a group made up of stakeholder groups representing more than one country and international organisation. The research setting was in the ISO 26000 WGSR; a group which worked for five years on developing the ISO 26000, a new ISO standard on social responsibility. More than 90 countries and 42 organisations divided into six stakeholder groups negotiated the drafts of the new ISO 26000 standard. I joined the group in January 2006 and the standard finally was first published in November 2010. The nature of the WGSR and actors that contributed to the social interactions made it a convenient setting for studying leadership from a relational perspective. A more detailed description of the WGSR, main groups and individuals can be found in chapter 5.

This chapter presents a broad introduction to this PhD research giving an indication of the specific contribution it makes. It will commence with an explanation of the academic debate to which the research contributes. Then, section 1.2 outlines the main points related to the debate on leadership studied from an entity versus a relational perspective. Section 1.3 offers an initial glimpse of the advantages of studying leadership as a process of organising instead of adopting a trait based approach. Section 1.4 gives a summary of the stages and processes that led to the development of the research questions. The last section gives a detailed synopsis of this thesis' chapters with a short summary of key findings.

1.2 The Debate on Entity vs. Relational Perspectives to Leadership

Relational studies in organisational research have been going on for more than a century (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000; James, 1976; Mead, 1932). Their focus is more on the configuration of relationships and their context than on objective and independent entities (Capra, 1996; Kuhn, 1970). Relational perspectives focus on communication and language in order to emphasise the space between and among human phenomena (Bouwen and Hosking, 2000; Dachler and Hosking, 1995; Fairhurst and Putnam, 2004). The focus is not on interpersonal or intra-personal processes between already known actors, but instead on the processes of interaction and conversation such as spoken language, non-linguistic actions and events (Abell and Simons, 2000; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Hosking, 2006). Therefore, relational perspectives concentrate on the communication processes and relationships rather than on the attributes or behaviours of individual leaders (Hosking et al, 1995).

This study is presented as a contribution to the debate on leadership and the way it is studied, measured and perceived in organisations. It sheds light on entity versus relational perspectives to leadership and therefore focuses on collective dynamics rather than the individual dynamics adopted in most leadership studies (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000; Dachler and Hosking, 1995; Drath, 2001; Hosking, 2006; Murrell, 1997). It also contributes to the debate on studying leadership as a trait of individuals or dyads versus studying leadership as a process of organising (Dachler, 1992; Hosking, 1988). A relational approach considers leadership from a wider perspective and goes beyond the manager-subordinate relationship (Rost, 1991; Sjöstrand et al., 2001). In this study leadership can be a property of a group and may take place in different directions (Gronn, 2002; Hogg, 2001; Murrell, 1997; Rost, 1991, 1995; Pearce and Conger, 2003). The relational perspective of leadership views leadership as a process of social construction (Bouwen and Hosking, 2000; Dachler, 1988, 1992; Gemmill and Oakley, 1992).

In order to study leadership, the current study, instead of looking at traits and characteristics of leaders, focuses on processes revealing how people decide and present themselves to each other (Hosking, 1988; Hosking and Fineman, 1990; Hosking and Morley, 1988; Hosking et al., 1995). Therefore, it is through acts and activities in a setting that we understand how leadership influence happens (Hosking, 1988). Thus, leadership is identified wherever there is a modified form of status and the emergence of a different social order, attitudes and goals (Dachler and

Hosking, 1995; Hosking and Morley, 1988). In the current study, the leadership relationship is not predefined (Graen, 2006). In traditional leadership studies, the leadership relationship is defined first, and then comes the study on whether characteristics of that kind of relationship are perceived by members in the relationship (Abott, 2001; House and Aditya, 1997).

The current study focuses mainly on exploring relational processes through which leadership is constructed, sustained and deconstructed in a global multistakeholder group composed of experts representing different stakeholder and organisations from different countries. Specifically, it focuses on organising acts and activities contributing to the emergence, preservation and disbandment of leadership in the ISO 26000 WGSR. Moreover, it analyses how leadership relationships are mediated by consensus-building, legitimacy, and delegation to groups within the ISO 26000 WGSR.

1.3 Studying Leadership as a Process of Organising

The initial research for this doctoral study considered leadership as a trait. However, initial data collected emphasised the possibility of studying leadership as a relational process. Further, reading of the literature encouraged me to focus specifically on relational leadership. Actually, the influence exerted in the ISO 26000 WGSR and considered as leadership is not limited to a specific group of individuals. Indeed, there were some members playing emergent or resistant leadership roles. My participant observation also showed me that there were various alternations in leadership according to the particular circumstances of the meetings. Some members who were active at some stages stopped being members of the whole WGSR or IDTF or had lesser influence. Some others lost their authority and influence within the group due to a shift in their relative status.

Indeed, many aspects of shared leadership, either at an individual or group level, had an influence on leadership relationships in the ISO 26000 WGSR. The dynamics of group leadership were often obvious in this process. Some stakeholder groups, ad hoc drafting groups, countries, or international organisations, shaped the orientation of the whole ISO 26000 WGSR. Other reasons in favour of looking at leadership as a process are related to the setting itself. In fact, it is rare to secure access to a global multistakeholder group for a prolonged period of time. Moreover, the setting is not a formal organisation but a task group functioning following a range

of pre-set and emerging norms. For all of these reasons, leadership could not be studied as a trait of an individual within that setting.

Another theme that surfaced from the data is related to legitimation of positions, decisions, stakeholder categories and individuals. Legitimacy had a considerable role in leadership relational processes within the ISO 26000 WGSR. Theoretically, each stakeholder category had equal status compared to others. However, some stakeholder groups' standpoints were given greater consideration than others. Therefore, they benefited from a privileged position compared to others in terms of voicing their consent or resistance. From these activities and contexts, it was clear that legitimation could not be exclusively related to entities within the setting. Rather, it was a relational process that influenced the construction and disbandment of leadership.

The data also showed the importance of consensus-building in maintaining or destabilising the social order within the setting. Observations revealed that conflicts and confrontations put the whole group's work at risk at some stages. Moreover, it showed that consensus was also used to legitimise or delegitimise the outcome and the dispositions of the different groups. Consensus or conflict in this setting had a significant influence on the emergence and legitimacy of leadership. The process of consensus-building showed that the whole process was not so different from many other professional fields with the presence of contradictory interests and values and intentions expressed and operating at many levels of analysis including individual or organisational. Lobbying and other similar activities were widely used to reach objectives.

The last theme that was recognised from the data is related to delegation to groups. It had shown itself to be a common practice in this stakeholder process. There was an intensive recourse made to delegation to groups for most of the critical or sensitive issues. Indeed, delegation to stakeholder balanced groups could be considered as a process of consensus itself. The consensus reached within small stakeholder balanced groups also strengthened the legitimation of text produced and of the social order as a whole. It also contributed to the process of leadership by legitimising some positions and delegitimising others. In fact, the study has illustrated that the level of consensus achieved or conflict occurring among group members had an influence on the processes of delegation to groups.

This study uses grounded theory methodology to examine the context, form and dynamics of relational leadership within a global multistakeholder group. The objective is to develop an explanatory account and grounded theory of the processes of construction and deconstruction of leadership. Acts and activities of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups are investigated as the organising processes contributing to the construction and deconstruction of leadership. The empirical study was conducted through collection of field notes resulting from participant observation within the ISO 26000 WGSR. This study adopted Bourdieu's relational sociology as a theoretical framework. One substantial challenge facing this research has been reconciling psychological perspectives on leadership with Bourdieu's sociological perspective.

1.4 Research Questions

I started the PhD with the aim of studying leadership in social responsibility in the Middle East and North Africa. I recognised leadership and social responsibility as the key concepts in the initial stages. When I went to the meeting of Sydney in January 2007, I collected as much data as I could. However, I was unable to recognise what exactly I had to study and concentrate on within leadership in social responsibility. Upon analysing my Sydney diary and referring to some of the relevant literature, I started identifying some interesting aspects for further research. I decided making social responsibility as a context for my study instead of the main topic and chose to focus more on leadership and some of its related phenomena. I started considering delegation in leadership, the role of leadership in institutionalisation, leadership discourse, and resistance as a form of leadership, and motives of leadership.

It was in the meeting of Vienna that I decided to focus on some research points to be considered further while interacting with other participants. In fact, I discovered that some points were more relevant to the context of ISO 26000 WGSR. For instance, delegation showed itself to be a common practice in this kind of stakeholder process. In addition, institutionalisation in its early stages was quite obvious either in emergent norms, evolving practices or concepts related to social responsibility and the process as a whole. Moreover, official leadership discourse and practice within it were not always the same. It was plain that it was a stakeholder process involving people and organisations, participating not necessarily with the same purposes and intentions. However, I discovered, at least to my knowledge thus far, that the whole process was not very different from many other professional fields with the presence of contradictory

interests and intentions at most levels of analysis: individual and organisational. Lobbying and other similar activities were widely used to reach objectives. This had an impact on the way decisions were taken and especially on delegation.

With the development of data collection, I changed the focus of the research towards relational leadership in a global multistakeholder setting (Figure 1 illustrates the processes which led to this focus). The ISO 26000 global multistakeholder group provided a suitable setting to understanding leadership as a process over time in my participation as an Expert/Observer for several reasons:

- it was an informal organisational setting, comprising six stakeholder categories from different countries; which is different from traditional organisations. The structures evolved with time according to the needs of the group;
- theoretically, each stakeholder category had equal status as the other stakeholder categories; which is different from hierarchical organisations.
- some stakeholder categories had more power over others in that their proposals/ opinions are given more weight.

I observed the behaviour of members while interacting, at the construction and disbandment of organising acts and then concluded from that the relational processes contributing to leadership. People are considered not as independent entities but as their contribution to the processes of leadership. In this context leadership:

- did not necessarily occur merely as a trait of an individual person, but also as a reflection of relationships in a group;
- could be investigated as a process instead of a trait;
- was not essentially formal and does not necessarily happen among the ‘winners’ from the relationships; it could also be among the ‘losers’;
- was not always specific to a leader in each stakeholder category. So it was not always possible to assign leadership roles to a specific individual;
- had been observed as occurring during collective dynamics in interactive processes and often spontaneously and simultaneously.

Relational processes are leadership when ‘the social influence that is generated contributes to the emergence, construction and change of social order’ (Hosking and Morley, 1988: 85). Social

order is dynamic and is being continuously renegotiated, reinterpreted and re-implemented (Hosking and Morley, 1988). According to Dachler:

‘A relational ontology raises different questions for leadership. It asks how the processes of leadership and management in organisations emerge, how realities of leadership are interpreted within the network of relations; how organisations are designed, directed, controlled and developed on the bases of collectively generated knowledge about organisational realities; how decisions and actions are embedded in collective sensemaking and attribution processes from which structures of social interdependence emerge and in turn reframe the collectively generated organisational realities.’ (Dachler, 1992: 171)

Considering leadership as a process of organising (Hosking and Morley, 1988), the study looks at the organising processes which contribute to the construction and change of social order (Uhl-Bien, 2006) and will not focus on organisational structures as such. Organising processes recognised as significant in the current study are consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups. Consensus-building is understood to be a relational process of sensemaking and which does not always take place at the same time and in the same place.

Legitimacy or legitimation is adopted as validation or validity (Weber, 1968). ‘Validity embeds the norms, values, beliefs, practices, and procedures of a group in a system of social controls, creating expectations of both authorization and endorsement if they are violated, which also counteract pressures to change’ (Zelditch, 2001: 45). Legitimation is a mechanism that ‘mediates between structures of groups and actions of individuals’ (Zelditch, 2001: 45). I also look at processes of de-legitimation. Delegation in this study is a process of delegation of tasks or decision-making powers from one multistakeholder group to another smaller representative group. Therefore, individual delegation from a superior to a subordinate is not considered.

The study thereby fills a gap in the leadership literature insofar as there is no substantial body of academic literature on leadership processes within an informal global multistakeholder setting. Actually, there are scarce studies about the processes of disbandment or collapse of leadership, about consensus-building and delegation to groups within global multistakeholder groups.

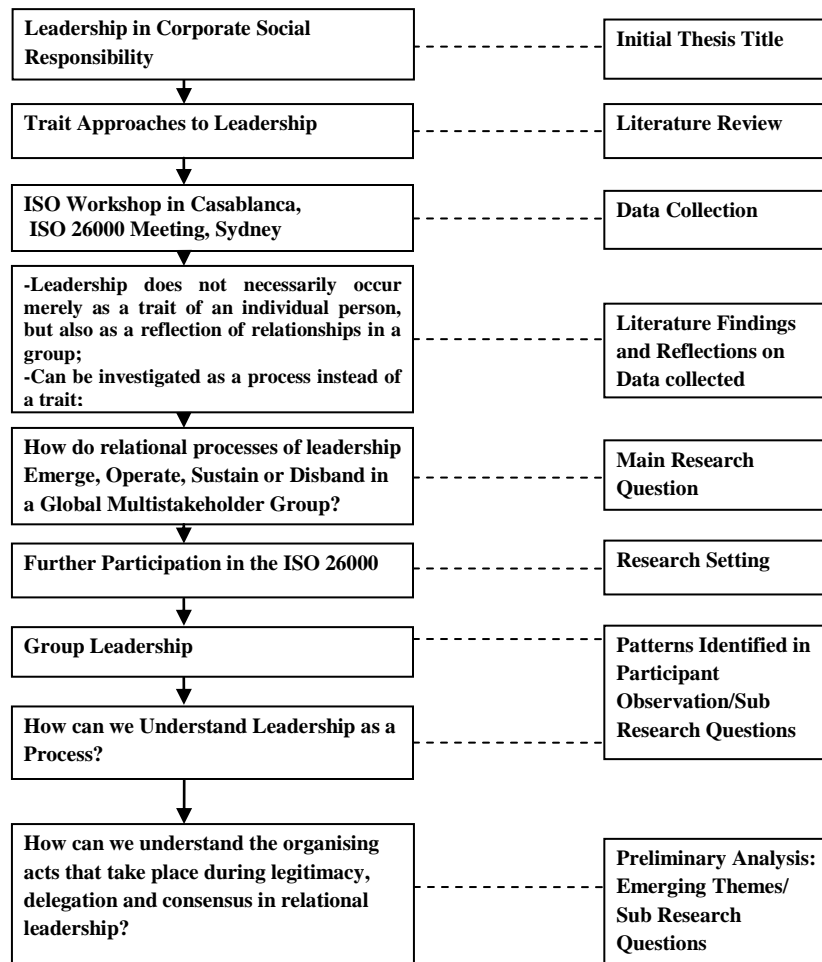


Figure 1: The Process of Development of Research Questions

Thus, the research questions emerging from both the initial field work and literature review are:

Main Research Question

- What are the relational processes through which leadership is constructed, sustained and deconstructed in the ISO 26000 WGSR?

Secondary Research Questions

- What are the organising acts and activities contributing to the emergence, preservation and disbandment of leadership in the ISO 26000 WGSR?

- How are leadership relationships mediated by consensus-building, legitimacy, and delegation to groups within the ISO 26000 WGSR?

The nature of the research questions directly affected the research design. Exploring relational processes is difficult to be conducted through quantitative or interview-based approaches.

1.5 Synopsis of Thesis Chapters

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. Each chapter is divided into different sections. **Chapter 1** provides an introduction to the thesis and the research setting. The first section gave an initial background of the study. Section 1.2 introduced the debate on studying leadership from entity versus relational perspective. Section 1.3 discussed the research issues, questions and the rationale for studying leadership as a process as well as the determinants of leadership in this study. Thus, the main research question emerging from both the initial field work and literature review is about the relational processes through which leadership is constructed, sustained and deconstructed in the ISO 26000 WGSR. Section 1.4 described the development process of research questions and its impact on the research design. Section 1.5 gives detailed outlines of the chapters and short summaries of key findings.

This research studies leadership as a process. In the research setting, leadership could not readily be examined as a trait of an individual. Acts and activities of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups are investigated as the organising acts and processes contributing to the construction and deconstruction of leadership. Leadership in this context occurs also as influence within a group. Influence could also come from people playing roles of support and is not necessarily assigned to any one single individual.

Chapter 2 is broken down into six sections and elaborates on concepts arising from the literature review and relevant theories. Namely, it explores relational leadership and its overarching organising processes that contribute to the construction and change of social order. In section 2.2, entity and relational perspectives to leadership are presented. The relational perspective is adopted as the principal methodology for the thesis. Furthermore, the difficulties and obstacles facing identification of leadership as a relational process are highlighted. Actually, some leadership theories are categorized as entitative although they involve relationships. Relational processes are identified as leadership whenever ‘social influence that is generated contributes to

the emergence, construction and change of social order' (Hosking and Morley, 1988: 85). A relational perspective to leadership assumes that social reality lies in the context of relationships and focuses on processes of interaction, sensemaking and on language as a means of communication (Dachler and Hosking, 1995; Fairhurst and Putnam, 2004). In this perspective, knowledge is socially constructed and distributed (Dachler and Hosking, 1995). In the current study, leadership is not only about the leader but also about relational properties of a group such as shared responsibility and team leadership. Manager-subordinate relationships are considered as just one form of leadership.

Organising processes considered include consensus building, legitimacy and delegation to groups. Section 2.3 presents consensus building as being influenced by norms or rules, language, culture, emotions, and ambiguity. Section 2.4 presents theories of legitimacy as related to the current study. Leadership is maintained by a degree of legitimacy in all situations. Weber's process of validation or validity as embedding norms, values, beliefs, practices, and procedures of a group is being emphasised. Legitimation processes, or validity, are collective rather than individual (Zelditch, 2001: 44). A particular focus of this doctoral research study is on the legitimacy of status as well as of power and rewards (Berger et al., 1998). Section 2.5 reviews literature on delegation and its relationship with leadership. Most of the research on delegation is about delegation from an individual manager to an individual subordinate or a dyad of subordinates in a hierarchical organisation. This research concentrates on delegation to groups by other groups and its contribution to leadership processes. In the current study, both delegation and consultation are considered.

Chapter 3 is allocated to the theoretical framework. It is broken down into six sections. In section 3.2, a distinction is made between substantialist and transactional perspectives in sociology. Bourdieu's habitus has uncovered methodological limits of individual finalism (Wacquant, 1989: 43). Self-action, interaction, rational choices and moral action approaches in sociology have been found to be failing to uncover relational processes. Section 3.3 introduces transactional perspectives and relational sociology. Transactional perspectives consider that entities gain their being while interacting in the relations and not because of their independent original existence (Cassirer, 1953: 36). Transactional perspectives thus exclude individuals, society or even structures from being the unit of analysis in sociology. Section 3.4 offers an

introduction to relational sociology and Bourdieu's main concepts and theory. Bourdieu's relational sociology and mainly his concepts of habitus, capital, field and practice offer a convenient framework for studying relational leadership processes by analysing organising acts of consensus, legitimacy and delegation to groups. Habitus is the unconscious practical comprehension of the world, or collective history, which is embodied in a socializing or learning process which starts from a young age (Jenkins, 2007: 76; Pinnington et al., 2003).

Bourdieu's relational theory may be understood to consist of three core concepts: social position, disposition and position taking. Dispositions are understood as the result of an organising action, an unconscious way of being and tendency or inclination (Bourdieu, 1977: 214). The intersection between habitus and its dispositions on the one hand and the field on the other hand gives place to practice (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu takes into consideration economic and social capital in the constitution of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984: 75). Symbolic capital entails resources available to a social actor on the basis of prestige or recognition (Bourdieu, 1984). In this study, focus is on social and cultural forms of symbolic capital. Image and reputation are also identified as forms of capital. Capital is also considered as a legitimising factor of domination (Swartz, 2008). Field positions can be occupied by individuals, social networks, social groups, and institutions, formal and informal organisations.

Bourdieu's third main concept is Fields. Bourdieu contended that fields have a 'structure and a distribution of economic and cultural capital' (Prior, 2000). Fields' dimensions are defined by relations of domination and struggle over the most legitimate form of capital (Abbott, 2001; Swartz, 2008). Practice is offered as the result of learning processes which are neither conscious nor unconscious (Bourdieu, 1990a). Practice is located in space and time and happens with experience and accumulation (Jenkins, 2007: 96-70). The notion of 'strategising' is finally offered as a link between the concepts of practice, habitus and field. Section 3.5 looks at the impact of the use of relational sociology on some organisational and methodological issues. Power is identified as the myriad of positions that social actors occupy in one or more networks as a result of the relationships they are involved in (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 220; Emirbayer, 1997: 292; Knoke, 1990).

Chapter 4 is divided into 8 sections. Section 4.2 outlines some of the grounded theory characteristics and design. This study uses grounded theory to explore relational leadership

within a global multistakeholder group. Grounded theory is an empirical data-driven process (Battersby, 1980). In this study, theory is grounded through the observation of interacting individuals and groups in a global multistakeholder setting. Data overload is minimised whenever saturation is reached (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Glaser and Strauss (1967) identified four steps in the grounding of the theory. The first step is the extraction of initial categories from data available. The second step is comparing categories as more data is collected. At this stage, data could be encoded either manually or through software. In the current study, data was manually encoded into categories. The third step involves further collection of data for each category till saturation is reached. At the same time, data collected is continuously and systematically organised and categorised through theoretical sampling and continual comparative analysis. The fourth and last step involves grounding the theory following the categories adopted.

Section 4.3 describes the methods of participant observation employed in this study and provides my account of the participant observer experience and its impact on my research. I was a complete participant observer combining both active participation and research. Observation diaries of the interaction, speeches of participants, email exchanges and written memos and notes relating to the organisation of the setting were all considered. Only four diaries from four meetings of the ISO 26000 WGSR and IDTF were directly considered in depth. Section 4.4 describes the methods used for collecting field-notes and the way they were analysed. Field-notes had been analysed at the same time they were collected and up until saturation (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Diaries have been chronologically organised and combined quotes presented from interactions in the setting in addition to my interpretation. The diaries were analysed and reported according to the categories retained. The data analysis is explicated through direct quotes from my diaries and discussion and interpretation. I had to compare the most frequent sub-categories of consensus, legitimacy and delegation from the four shortlisted diaries. Then, an extensive account was written on every category and trends within that category.

Section 4.5 sheds light on the way that theory had been grounded in the current research. After saturation, the sub-categories retained were developed and integrated with the existing categories. Section 4.6 focuses on the methodological challenges related to relational and naturalistic approaches. The issues of time available for research, objective reality and the

amount of data collected among others are discussed. Section 4.7 deals with ethical challenges and the way they have been addressed in this research.

Chapter 5 is intended as an introduction to the three data analysis chapters of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups. Section 5.2 describes the ISO 26000 WGSR and the different steps it went through from its foundation up until the publication of the ISO 26000 standard. Section 5.3 gives a description of profiles of the main organisational actors that contributed to the interaction in the ISO 26000. The main organisational actors are multistakeholder groups, international organisations, countries and language groups. Section 5.4 provides a detailed account of the data collection venues and settings. A list of meetings and teleconferences attended is provided. An explanation about the amount of data collected in every meeting and the diaries retained for data analysis purposes is provided.

Section 5.5 provides a detailed list of all of the individual actors in the interaction that are cited in this research. It is also giving a subjective evaluation of the extent of the contribution of every individual actor to the interaction and therefore leadership influence in the ISO 26000 WGSR. The contribution of each individual is categorised as being either significant or major. A major contribution is assigned to individuals who I perceived as having played crucial roles in either sustaining or jeopardising the existence, the sustainment and outcome of the ISO 26000 WGSR. Whereas a significant contribution is assigned to individuals who have played important roles that are perceived as not as crucial as compared to individuals who made a major contribution, it should be remembered that leadership in the current research is about individuals playing roles of a first order but also about individuals occupying roles of support or of a second order.

The data analysis chapters offer an analysis of the empirical data on three main recognised research categories: consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups. The main analysis is based on field notes arising from four meeting diaries: Vienna, Paris, Cape Town and Bahrain. Other diaries from other meetings were also reviewed for additional interpretation and reflection. I wrote diaries as part of my participant observer role in the ISO 26000 WGSR. The analysis consists of quotes from conversations amongst actors in interaction and interpretation of their meaning.

Chapter 6 is practically the first chapter dedicated to data analysis. It gives a full account of several consensus-building situations that happened in the ISO 26000 WGSR. Thirteen sub-categories were identified in the consensus-building category. Section 6.3.1 shows that time has been an important factor in consensus-building. Time could have been used for strategic purposes in the ISO 26000 WGSR. Section 6.3.2 examines the use of threats and warnings and its impact on consensus and relationships in the setting. Section 6.3.3 considers aspects of opposition and resistance in the ISO 26000 WGSR. Section 6.3.4 explores the use of irony and analogy in consensus-building and its influence on the shift in leadership relationships. Section 6.3.5 focuses on the different types of questions and their impact on relationships in consensus-building. Section 6.3.6 explores forms of sensemaking in the ISO 26000 WGSR and their impact on consensus-building processes. Sensemaking is identified as being conducted through text and online in addition to face-to-face communication.

Section 6.3.7 exposes situations of ambiguity and uncertainty in the ISO 26000 process. Being a negotiation process with no rigid rules and procedures, the ISO 26000 WGSR has shown to be rich in such situations. Section 6.3.8 analyses how the different actors in the interaction attract attention to difficult issues and contradictions in text and in processes. Section 6.3.9 focuses on aspects of the respect or the non-respect of an instituted rule according to which compromises cannot be reviewed or reopened. Section 6.3.10 explores ways of understanding the compromises reached by different actors during interaction. Section 6.3.11 investigates different aspects of prioritisation in the process and their impact on consensus-building and leadership relationships. Section 6.3.12 analyses the contribution of linguistic and cultural issues to consensus-building in the ISO 26000 WGSR. Section 6.3.13 explores emotions as contributors to consensus-building and as signs of shifts in leadership relationships.

Chapter 7 is the second chapter dedicated to data analysis. It gives a full account of several legitimacy situations that took place in the ISO 26000 WGSR. Eight sub-categories were identified within the legitimacy category. Section 7.3.1 examines the ISO 26000 WGSR claim on being a multistakeholder group. It attempts to ascertain whether all factors for a multistakeholder group are addressed. Section 7.3.2 analyses the influence of countries or governments of countries on the ISO 26000 WGSR. Although the ISO 26000 WGSR is supposed to be

functioning solely through following a multistakeholder approach, there were several events where specific countries had a considerable influence on the WGSR and its outcome.

Section 7.3.3 analyses the influence of international organisations on the ISO 26000 WGSR. Section 7.3.4 looks at ways used by different individuals and groups in legitimising their positions by referring to their stakeholder groups. Section 7.3.5 assesses the influence of language groups on the ISO 26000 WGSR and its impact on the legitimacy in the WGSR. Section 7.3.6 explores situations where text was modified in the ISO 26000 WGSR and the justifications used to legitimise modifications. Section 7.3.7 concentrates on the specific processes of legitimisation related to the justification and reference to external documents. Section 7.3.8 attends to aspects of legitimacy related to the ability of individuals and groups to gain funding and participate in the different meetings and events of the ISO 26000 WGSR.

Chapter 8 is the third chapter dedicated to data analysis. It gives a full account of some delegation to groups' situations that took place in the ISO 26000 WGSR. Eight sub-categories were identified within the delegation to groups' category. The analysis of delegation to groups focuses on a set of categories and sub-categories grounded in the data. Quotes from the four meeting diaries of Vienna, Paris, Cape Town and Bahrain are used in this analysis. Other diaries, emails and documentation were deployed for additional information or clarification.

Eight sub-categories are identified in this consensus-building data analysis. Section 8.2 provides the list of delegation to groups' sub-categories and the way they were extracted from the data and retained for analysis. Section 8.3 gives a detailed analysis of the eight sub-categories retained in the delegation to groups' category. Delegation to groups was defined in this study as the process of assigning some general or specific tasks from a delegating large group to a smaller delegated group. The form of delegation could be conditional or open. There are similarities and differences between delegation to individuals and delegation to groups.

Sub-section 8.3.1 analyses the mandate of a delegated group. The study showed that an unclear mandate leads to confusion but could also serve to impose the agenda of some individuals or groups. Ambiguity was also found to be a catalyst but also a barrier for consensus-building in a delegated group. Sub-section 8.3.2 focuses on rules in delegated groups. Many of the rules in the ISO 26000 WGSR were emerging and created by delegated groups' members as part of

consensus-building. Overall, norms in delegated groups emerged according to the stage of development of the group and the type of individuals and groups involved in the interaction. Sub-section 8.3.3 examines the reasons for delegation to groups. Delegated groups are often created to facilitate the process of consensus-building, resolve conflicts or better manage time. The purpose of a delegated group is to reach an agreement and bring it back to the delegating group. The study found a difference between the mandate to discuss issues and the mandate to make decisions.

Sub-section 8.3.4 analyses membership in delegation to groups. Members of a delegated group are found not necessarily to have competence and goal congruence. Stakeholder balance in membership is significant in the legitimacy of a delegated groups' outcome. Sub-section 8.3.5 gives examples of tasks in delegated groups while sub-section 8.3.6 concentrates on Reporting in Delegated Groups. Sub-section 8.3.7 looks at consultation in delegated groups. The purpose of consultation in the ISO 26000 WGSR was to enrich the debate or to gather further views on a specific issue. The last sub-section 8.3.8 expands on the creation of IDTF as a Delegated Group. The creation of IDTF was one of the crucial moments of delegation to groups and of the ISO 26000 WGSR in general. The current study has also showed that successful outcomes improve members' relationships in delegated groups. Nevertheless, frequent delegation to groups can lead to conflict in the delegating group.

The data analysis revealed a substantial relationship between actions and institutional activities of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups, and leadership as a continuous process of organising. The participants played their roles of enacting or destabilising leadership which can be understood as a social construction of members during interaction. Consensus-building was used as a tool for legitimising and reaching an agreed social order in the group and therefore highlights change in group and leadership processes. Legitimacy has been deployed at different levels and by different actors to promote some individuals and groups while disqualifying others. Delegation to groups also served as processes of legitimation and resolution of conflict in the ISO 26000 WGSR process and therefore empowered some individuals and groups while it weakened others.

Chapter 9 presents the findings from the empirical study in the light of the literature review and the theoretical framework and grounds the theory. The stability of social order requires

consensus and is attributed to legitimacy, consensus-building and delegation to groups. Leadership as a socially constructed social order was maintained according to the conditions of consensus-building and legitimacy in the process. The study has also shown that norms play a significant role in maintaining and destabilising a global multistakeholder group. Leadership is socially constructed in a global multistakeholder group more as group leadership than leadership of individuals. The processes of leadership influence could arise from actors within or outside of the setting.

Section 9.2 is dedicated to consensus-building in a global multistakeholder group. It gives some characteristics of building consensus in a global multistakeholder group and its relationship with leadership as organising. Enforcement mechanisms of consensus-building are considered significant in the emergence of leadership relationships in the process. Ambiguity is found to be part of this process and contributes to social order. The study also showed that social order could be the outcome of a voluntary compromise as well as a result of coercion. Language had been playing important roles in consensus-building and legitimising positions, acts and entities. Section 9.3 expands on legitimacy as an organising act of leadership. Legitimacy is understood as a process of validation where acts, processes and entities are validated against norms. Leadership as social order is maintained or modified through legitimacy yielding from consensus based on norms, power or both. The study has also highlighted the special influence of countries and international organisations in the global multistakeholder process through their delegates and documents. Some of the limits of the multistakeholder nature of the ISO 26000 WGSR are also summarised.

Section 9.4 proposes a theory of delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group. This is considered a major contribution since no research on delegation to groups by other groups could be found. Delegation to groups is found to contribute to leadership relational processes by being a means of consensus-building and a mechanism of legitimation. Delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group is conditional and depends on the validation of compromises by the delegating group. Delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group is conducted as a means of conflict resolution and also as a part of consensus-building. Stakeholder balance has more significance in the membership of delegated groups than job congruence. Loose mandates for delegated groups allow for more influence exerted by specific individuals and groups but can

also endanger the stability of the original group. The study has also shown that there is a positive relationship between delegation to groups and organisational outcomes.

Section 9.5 presents a model of relational leadership in a global multistakeholder group. The focus is on organising acts and activities that contribute to the social construction of leadership relationships. Relational leadership is found to include organising acts of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups. Legitimacy, consensus-building and delegation to groups contribute to the construction and distribution of knowledge according to leadership positions. The approval and disapproval of text involves the construction and disbandment of leadership relationships. Actually, the process of conversation and negotiation of text involves the negotiation of leadership positions. The study also reveals a positive relationship between the maturity of relationships in the group and organisational outcomes. This study has also confirmed that leadership happens at all levels of the organisation and not only between the main actors in the interaction. Leadership relationships and dispositions change according to the social order in place that is a reflection of leadership relationships as acts of organising.

Chapter 10 is the concluding chapter for this thesis. This research aimed at responding to a principal question that is about exploring relational processes through which leadership is constructed and disbanded in the ISO 26000 WGSR. The study also attempted to respond to other secondary questions about organising acts contributing to relational leadership in a global multistakeholder group and understand how the organising acts of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups mediate leadership relationships. Section 10.2 of the chapter presents some theoretical and professional contributions this research may have brought to knowledge in the field of relational leadership, and specifically its occurrence in global multistakeholder groups. Section 10.3 analyses some of the main limitations of this PhD research and suggests topics for further research. Section 10.4 makes some recommendations regarding research on relational leadership in global multistakeholder groups and its organising acts of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to Chapter

In this study, relational leadership is identified as a process of organising. The research thus looks at organising acts and activities and at ways to approach them within a global multistakeholder group. Relationality in organisations is overviewed and then transposed to leadership. Making difference between entity and relational perspectives clarifies further the subject practically to be studied. The challenge to this review is the way relational leadership could be perceived and theorised. This is particularly difficult knowing that the concept of leadership in this study is the outcome of other organising processes, in substance consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups.

The first organising act of leadership to be studied is consensus-building. The concept turned to be highly linked to leadership in a multistakeholder group where decisions are mostly based on consent rather than orders. In this context, norms seemed to be decisive elements for consensus-building in either unveiling or intensifying ambiguity in a multistakeholder context. Emotions and language have also the potential to play a role in leadership in a multistakeholder group at an international level. The second process of leadership organising is legitimacy. Legitimacy is investigated here as a relational group aspect. Legitimacy showed big potential to influence relational leadership processes in a global multistakeholder group. The third organising act of leadership is delegation to groups. Most of research on delegation is about delegation from an individual to an individual or a dyad in a hierarchical organisation. The studies on the relationship between delegation and leadership are also about entity perspectives to leadership and particularly LMX theory.

This chapter seeks to approach relational leadership and its overarching organising processes contributing to it. It is organised as follows: section 2 identifies relational leadership situating it in a general context of social construction. The section also differentiates relational from entity perspectives to leadership and attempts to outline approaches to recognising leadership as a relational process. Section 3 elaborates on consensus-building and its relative issues such as ambiguity, norms, emotions, cultural and language issues. Section 4 outlines theories of

legitimacy at a group level with particular focus on a stakeholder setting. Section 5 attempts to explore some of the existing literature on delegation and its relationship with leadership.

2.2 Relational Leadership in a Global Multistakeholder Group

2.2.1 Relationality in Organisational Research

A relational perspective has gone largely unconsidered in the literatures of management and organisation (Dachler and Hosking, 1995). The origins of a relationality orientation to organisational research can be traced back to scholarship in the early 1900's (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000), when social scientists first found that the structures of cultural and personal consciousness were inseparable (James, 1976; Mead, 1932). The origin of the term relationality may be traced back to the feminist work of Jean Baker Miller (1976).

Relational perspectives view organisations as elaborate relational networks of changing persons, moving in various directions through space and over time, in a complex interplay of effects between individual organisational members and the system into which they enter (Abell and Simons, 2000; Sayles, 1964). Therefore, relational perspectives explore the 'space between' people and phenomena in organisational life (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000: 551). They are based on the premise that whatever is being studied should be thought of as a configuration of relationships (Capra, 1996), and not an independent, 'objective' entity. Moreover, a relational perspective assumes that social reality lies in the context of relationships (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000: 551).

Relational perspectives share an emphasis on communication and on language as a means of communication (Fairhurst and Putnam, 2004). Text is thought of as a narrative on the way something could be understood (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). Researchers who follow relational approaches see dialogue as a dialectical movement between and among human phenomena in which true interaction or real meaning emerges in the 'space between' (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000: 551). Meaning is constantly negotiated and renegotiated in the relational act of conversation (Abell and Simons, 2000: 161). The focus is not on inter-personal or intra-personal processes between already known actors, but instead on the relational linkages resulting from written and spoken language non-linguistic actions and events (Hosking, 2006).

Relational perspectives adopt a narrative metaphor that engenders a shift in understanding of organisations as ‘things’ towards experiencing them more as an array of stories, always in the act of construction whose meaning and relevance is context-dependent (Abell and Simons, 2000: 161). Therefore, the focus of relational perspectives is on processes of interaction, conversation, narrating, dialoguing, and multiloguing (Dachler and Hosking, 1995). This emphasis is consistent with social constructionism which centers communication processes as the vehicle in which self and world are in ongoing construction (Bouwen and Hosking, 2000).

2.2.2 Relationality and Leadership

The term relational leadership is relatively new (Murrell, 1997; Drath, 2001; Uhl-Bien, 2003). Uhl-Bien (2006: 654) defines relational leadership as a ‘social influence process through which emergent coordination such as evolving social order and change are constructed and produced’. Emerging work in relational leadership has been arguing for an expansion of relationship-based approaches beyond the manager–subordinate dyad, which is the case in most entity theories (Offstein et al., 2006), as well as for greater recognition that leadership can occur in any direction (Rost, 1991) and that leadership is a relational property of a group (Hogg, 2001). Both Hosking (1988) and Dachler (1992) see leadership as a process of organising that breaks down the traditional distinction between ‘leadership of people’ and ‘the management of organisations’.

Furthermore, a relational perspective views leadership as social reality, emergent and inseparable from context (Dachler and Hosking, 1995; Hosking, 1988). Applied to leadership, a relational perspective changes the focus from the individual to the collective dynamic (Hosking, 2006). Consequently, relational perspectives do not seek to identify attributes or behaviours of individual leaders but instead focus on the communication processes through which relational realities are made (Hosking et al, 1995). In this sense, relational perspectives view leadership as the processes by which social order is constructed and changed (Hosking and Morley, 1988).

A relational ontology raises different questions for leadership. For example, it asks ‘how the processes of leadership and management in organisations emerge; how realities of leadership are interpreted within the network of relations; how organisations are designed, directed, controlled and developed on the bases of collectively generated knowledge about organisational realities;

and how decisions and actions are embedded in collective sensemaking and attribution processes from which structures of social interdependence emerge and in turn reframe the collectively generated organisational realities' (Dachler, 1992: 171).

2.2.3 Social Construction of Leadership

The relational perspective views knowledge as socially constructed and socially distributed (Dachler and Hosking, 1995). Knowing is viewed as an ongoing process of meaning making (Weick, 1995). Hence, in a relational constructionist perspective, what is and how we know it are viewed as ongoing achievements constructed in sequences of acts and/or events (Hosking, 2000). The process of reification contributes to the confusion about leadership: According to Gemmill and Oakley:

'Reification is a social process which converts an abstraction or mental construct into a supposed real entity. Through reification the social construction of leadership is mystified and accorded an objective existence.' (Gemmill and Oakley, 1992: 115)

Within the process of reification, a leader or a group of leaders contribute to social construction of reality (Gemmill and Oakley, 1992). The myth of leadership stops 'uncomfortable needs, emotions and wishes from emerging when people work together' (Gemmill, 1986: 44). Gemmill and Oakley (1992) contended that group members are likely to construct leadership as a way to flee emotions of fear and helplessness whenever they face situations of ambiguity. They prefer to imagine that there should always be someone who take the lead and find solutions to the problems arising. That way, they keep themselves within a social order familiar to them. The reality they build up in their imagination is alienating in the terms that it impedes them from neither perceiving any viable options nor taking action (Morgan, 1986). Therefore, both reification and its resultant alienation contribute to mentally constructed leadership phenomena (Gemmill and Oakley, 1992). Leadership as a social process does not necessarily involve a power outside the self to which members abdicate authority (Gemmill and Oakley, 1992).

2.2.4 Sensemaking and Leadership

Sensemaking fills a diverse set of gaps in organisational theory (Weick et al., 2005). As related to leadership, sensemaking could help conceptualize how leadership as an act of influence happens. It could also help delimit what kind of acts or activities could be considered as

leadership. Furthermore, it could also help explain the meaning of leadership among other organisational processes and phenomena.

Sensemaking is 'an issue of language, talk, and communication' (Weick et al., 2005: 409). It 'involves the ongoing retrospective development of plausible images that rationalize what people are doing' (Weick et al., 2005: 409). It is more about action and interpretation (Weick 1993: 644; Laroche, 1995: 66; Lant, 2002; Weick et al., 2005). Actors in the interaction look at the influence processes happening and construct an image or a mental model which makes interpretation of the action easier for them.

Actually, the human mind converts the action of influence into interpretable events. Obviously, they have to describe the action and elaborate on the interpretation in a way or the other. During this process, they need to allocate responsibilities to some actors who are understood as having greater influence than others in the same setting or situation. This is when they attribute the title of 'leader' to the person or people who are thought of as incarnating that role. That could be part of human nature permanently seeking to construct a certain social order. There is the possibility that there would be no order in real life at a certain moment. Nevertheless, actors in the interaction would attempt to imagine an order to appease the fears related to the unknown.

Sensemaking is 'about labeling and categorizing to stabilize the streaming of experience' (Weick et al., 2005: 411). This means 'imposing labels on interdependent events in ways that suggest plausible acts of managing, coordinating, and distributing' (Weick et al., 2005: 411). Labelling strives to clear differences and offer a cognitive representation which is recognizable by all (Weick et al., 2005). However, labeling does not reflect the whole reality in process (Weick et al., 2005).

Various factors 'such as previous experiences, discussions, learning and interactions' influence sensemaking (Weick et al., 2005). Sensemaking is therefore is a mutual exchange between actors in the interaction and their environment (Campbell, 1997). Those exchanges get a meaning once selected and adopted (Campbell, 1997). The organising process of enactment sets a certain way of order into the setting through 'noticing and bracketing' (Weick et al., 2005: 411). The 'number of possible meanings gets reduced in the organising process of selection' (Weick et al., 2005: 414). Once retained, the story becomes substantial and recognizable according to past

experiences (Weick et al., 2005). In overall, sensemaking is on identifying meaning to ‘deal with uncertainty’ (Mills, 2003: 44; Fairhurst, 2009: 1622). To deal with ambiguity, actors in the interaction ‘settle for a plausible story’ (Weick et al., 2005: 414) by assigning a cognitive representation of a ‘leader’ in charge of dissipating the fears of uncertainty.

2.2.5 Entity Perspectives to Leadership

An entity perspective to leadership focuses on identifying attributes of individuals as they engage in interpersonal relationships. Relational perspectives view leadership as a process of social construction through which particular understandings of leadership come about and are given privileged ontology (Dachler, 1992). Entity perspectives approach leadership from the standpoint of relationships existing in individual perceptions, cognitions, attributes, and behaviours. These perspectives presume an individually constituted reality, which conveys a view of leadership as more individually-based, and related to a causal set of factors in the design and development of organisations (Dachler, 1992).

There have been a set of theories categorized as entitative even when they involve relationships. For example, leader–member exchange theory (LMX) involves relationships that result in incremental influence, even so it is considered as a subject-object understanding of relationships and an entity perspective (Dachler and Hosking, 1995). Furthermore, Hollander's model (1964, 1978) is relational and focuses on process, but considers process from the standpoint of individuals (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Moreover, charismatic relationships theory has also been considered as an entity theory. This approach arose out of the integration of self-identity theory with socialized and personalized charismatic relationships (Weierter, 1997) and developed propositions on how followers' self-concepts influence the type of relationship they form with the leader (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

Another entitative theory is the relational-self theory applying social cognition and identity to leadership (Lord et al., 1999). It focuses on the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships to others (Brewer and Gardner, 1996). Similarly, Hogg (2001) uses the concept of the collective self to develop what he called a ‘Social Identity Theory of Leadership’. He offers a view of leadership as a ‘relational property’ within a group (Hogg, 2001: 185). Specifically, he proposes that leaders emerge, maintain their position, and are

effective as a result of them being identified with prototypical or normative characteristics of in-group members. The processes described in relation to the concepts of relational self and collective-self appear more consistent with a constructivist than a constructionist perspective (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

Another significant development of leadership theory resulted from the integration of leadership with social network theory. Balkundi and Kilduff (2005) describe the key role that networks play in either supporting or negating the actions of individual leaders (Bedeian and Hunt, 2006). Although these approaches consider relationships in the context of larger collectivities, they still focus on individual perceptions of relational quality and relational ties, rather than a socially constructed reality (Hosking et al., 1995). In this sense, Hosking (1988) criticized Granovetter (1973) for not investigating the dynamics of network relationships either weak or strong, and therefore contended that he paid little attention to social exchange, social influence, and associated values and interests.

In another integration of network theory and leadership, Graen (2006: 277) offers a transformation of LMX theory to what he calls the 'new LMX-MMX theory of Sharing Network Leadership'. This approach recognises the importance of both formal and informal influences on individual, team and network flows of behaviour (Katz and Kahn, 1978). Actually, researchers have suggested that mature leadership relationships lead to a transformation from self-interest to team interests (Burns, 1978), which has been linked to better team development and output success (Locke and Latham, 1990). Therefore, the theory proposes that the development of a network of leadership-sharing relationships within teams should be positively associated with team effectiveness (Graen, Hui and Taylor, 2006).

Consistent with Graen's (2006) extension of LMX theory, Offstein et al. (2006) propose extending LMX research beyond the dyad by introducing the triadic level of analysis. However, the triads within this theory extension are still considered primarily from an individual member's perspective. The last theory I categorize as an entity perspective to leadership is Rost's post-industrial leadership theory. Rost (1995) sees leadership as a multidirectional influence relationship in which leaders and collaborators are the actors in the relationship. Moreover, he sees these relationships as operating within a larger context of the organisation in which multiple influence relationships are interacting with one another (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

Entity perspectives to leadership have been influenced by studies on embodiment. Recent studies question the idea of the body as a given physical entity (Van Wolputte, 2004: 251). The body is considered as a changing relationship (VanWolputte, 2004: 251). For Bourdieu, the body generates meaning but that does not come from its self-action (Bourdieu 1977). According to him (1977:82), habitus as an embodied society is subjective but not individual. He ‘maintained that his approach moves from social facts to the process of the social facts’ reproduction, from organism to embodiment’ (VanWolputte, 2004: 256). Embodiment does not mean by any way bodiliness (Lyon and Barthelet, 1994: 50). For Csordas (1990: 5) the body is the subject of culture and not its object. For Csordas (1990: 7), embodiment takes place within experience and not discourse. Embodiment is therefore about culture and experience and not about the body as an entity (Csordas, 1999: 143).

In summary, entity perspectives to leadership focus on individual perceptions, cognitions, attributes, and behaviours. These perspectives presume an individually constituted reality. Some theories are categorized as entitative though they involve relationships. Some theories convey a subject-object relationship. Some others consider leadership as a process but from an individual point of view. Even when a leadership relationship is considered within a group, it is analysed from an individual perspective. Even when considered in larger collectivities, some theories still focus on individual perceptions of relationships. There are some theories which consider leadership influences on individuals, teams and networks but are still entitative. The internalization of team interests in the LMX and MMX theories though still entitative, highlights some issues which are relational. For all those reasons, and since my focus in this study is on organising processes which contribute to the construction and disbandment of leadership, I will focus on relational perspectives to leadership rather than entitative ones.

2.2.6 Relational Perspectives to Leadership

The most prominent work on relational perspectives to leadership is that of Hosking, Dachler, and colleagues (Dachler, 1988, 1992; Hosking, 1988; Hosking and Morley, 1988; Hosking and Fineman, 1990; Hosking et al., 1995; Dachler and Hosking, 1995). Leadership is investigated as being a process and not as traits of individuals (Hosking, 1988). More attention is thus given to processes of organising contributing to the construction of relationships (Hosking, 1988). In these processes, interdependencies are organised in ways which promote the values and interests

of the social order (Hosking, 1988). Definitions of social order are dynamic and negotiated, found acceptable, implemented and re-negotiated (Hosking, 1988).

Similarly, Dachler (1992) argued that ‘the main focus of leadership, management and organisation research would be better directed at social processes rather than specific content issues. Sayles (1964) description of organisations as systems though is not purely a relational approach but is still consistent with relational orientations than traditional entity perspectives (Uhl-Bien, 2006). The organisation is ‘actively held together not by its policies and rules and procedures, but the web of interpersonal relationships that is constituted through ongoing interaction’ (Sayles, 1964).

The relational perspective is also consistent with what Drath (2001) and Murrell (1997) individually refer to as Relational Leadership. According to Drath (2001: 122), leadership is not ‘personal dominance or interpersonal influence but rather a process of relational dialogue in which organisational members engage and interact to construct knowledge systems together.’ This means that knowledge as such is collectively constructed and that discourse is the tool of construction. According to Murrell (1997: 38), relational leadership as a field of study focuses on ‘human processes of how people decide, act, and present themselves to each other’. Murrell (1997) sees leadership as a shared responsibility. Moreover, he describes a model of relational leadership in which the perspective is broadened to include more parties to the process than just the leader and more than just the leader–follower exchange relationship (Murrell, 1997; Uhl-Bien, 2006). His approach moves beyond what he calls the hero myth that focuses on the behaviours and characteristics of the individual leader on to understanding the collective act of leadership (Murrell, 1997). He argues that by studying leadership that occurs relationally, researchers have an opportunity to account for many more of the social forces working to influence group and organisational behaviour (Murrell, 1997; Uhl-Bien, 2006).

To contribute to the further clarification of the relational leadership processes, Uhl-Bien (2006: 668) proposed a ‘Relational Leadership Theory (RLT) as an overarching framework for a variety of methods, approaches, and even ontologies that explore the relational dynamics of leadership and organising’. The key question asked by RLT is about ‘the relational social processes by which leadership emerges and operates’ (Uhl-Bien, 2006: 666). At its core, RLT is a process theory of leadership recognising leadership wherever it occurs (Hunt and Dodge, 2000). Hunt

(2004) describes these approaches as including social network analysis (Burt, 1992), leader-member exchange (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995), lateral and distributive approaches (Sayles, 1964), and social constructionist views (Dachler, 1988). RLT sees leadership as capable of occurring in any direction (Rost, 1991). It recognises manager-subordinate relationships as just one form of leadership (Sjöstrand et al., 2001). Non-hierarchical relationships of support are also considered as forms of leadership (Murrell, 1997; Gronn, 2002; Pearce and Conger, 2003). This focus breaks away from the prevailing socially constructed notion that position in an organisation is necessarily a reflection of leadership. Consequently, leadership responsibility is viewed as 'residing within the collective and not just the individual leader' (Brown and Hosking, 1986: 67).

In summary, relational leadership is considered as 'a social influence process through which emergent coordination' such as evolving social order and change are 'constructed and produced' (Uhl-Bien, 2006: 654). The focus of relational leadership is on the collective dynamic. Leadership as social reality is emergent and inseparable from context (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). Manager-subordinate relationships are considered as just one form of leadership. In addition, non-hierarchical relationships of support are also considered as forms of leadership. Relational perspectives to leadership offer a more comprehensive illustration of leadership relationships (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). Ethnographic or discourse analytic studies or some combination of qualitative research methodologies are likely to offer more productive ways of studying relational leadership.

2.2.7 Recognising Relational Leadership Processes

An important challenge with regards to studying leadership as a relational process is the problem concerning the extent that the relational process could be considered as leadership. One way is to adopt an approach which identifies leadership as a modified form of status (Dachler and Hosking, 1995). From this perspective, relational processes are leadership when the social influence that is generated contributes to the emergence of social order (Hosking and Morley, 1988) and new approaches, attitudes and goals (Hogg, 2005). Another, but perhaps more problematic option is to predefine what a leadership relationship is, and then measure whether characteristics of that type of relationship are perceived by members in the relationship. This is the approach used in LMX theory and Graen's (2006) new version of LMX–MMX network

leadership sharing theory. However, this approach is entitative and can be criticised for being limited to a specific type of relationship (House and Aditya, 1997). This approach is also likely to be quantitative rather than qualitative which I adopted in the current study. Actually, by interrogating the opinions and feelings of individual members in the relationship, we fall into the entity perspective approach which is considered from the side of individuals' cognitions and perceptions about the relationship. What usually become ignored are 'the social processes by which leadership is constructed and constantly in the making' (Dachler and Hosking, 1995: 12).

Practically, this study looks at relational leadership processes within a global multistakeholder group where pure hierarchical relationships barely exist. Considering leadership as a process of organising, the study looks at the organising processes which contribute to the construction and change of social order. It does not focus on organisational structures as such. Social order is dynamic and is being continuously renegotiated, reinterpreted and re-implemented. It is identified through new approaches, attitudes and goals emerging in the setting. Therefore, the study analyses interdependencies and social influence that reflect the dynamics of the social order (Hosking, 1988) including delegation, legitimacy and consensus-building. This means analysing 'observed activities, acts, contacts and relationships of participants negotiating and enacting social order' (Hosking, 1988: 150-151). The focus is on interaction, communication and sensemaking processes in any direction. In the current study, more parties are included in the process than just the leader. Leadership is also considered as a relational property of a group. Thus, Leadership processes will also concern shared responsibility and team leadership.

2.3 Consensus-building in a Global Multistakeholder Group

The oldest approach to explaining legitimacy is consensus theory (Zelditch, 2001). Consensus as a purely descriptive theory is actually a very late development (Parsons, 1960). Aristotle's 'Politics' is the first in a long line of such theories. Rousseau's Social Contract (1948) presents a more complete consensus theory, in which a stable social order not only ought to rest on voluntary consent but actually does rest on it. Consent is in turn, a function of legitimacy, which is based on either consensus or the public interest or sometimes both (Zelditch, 2001: 41). Although consensus theory is articulated in some depth by the time of Rousseau, subsequent 'pure' social consensus theories stem from Parsons (1960). His theory has all the elements of a comprehensive consensus theory. According to Parsons:

- ‘(a) Acceptance of a social order is voluntary;
- (b) Consent is based on belief in norms and values;
- (c) Rulers and the ruled alike share the same norms, values, and beliefs;
- (d) It is either consensus, or in some consensus theories the group interest (e.g., Rousseau, 1948), that make norms and values ‘right’, hence ‘legitimate’; and
- (e) A social or political order is stable if and only if it is legitimate.’ (Jost et al., 2001: 41)

Probably the largest project in consensus theory grows out of a paper by Lipset (1959) on the social requisites of democracy. Lipset’s theory of the stability of democratic regimes attributes stability to legitimacy, as in any consensus theory, but adds a hypothesis about the causes of legitimacy. In Lipset, anything instrumental to attaining a group’s goal is legitimate if there is consensus about the group goal. Once it emerges, legitimacy stabilizes regimes. A lag emerges in the time that it takes for ineffectiveness to topple them, but ineffectiveness does delegitimise, hence destabilize, regimes in the long run (Kelman, 2001; Linz, 1978).

2.3.1 Defining Consensus-building

Consensus has been defined as an outcome of decision-making. For Schwartz (1989:29), consensus requires the agreement and support of all actors involved. He contended that the disagreement of one person breaks consensus (Schwartz, 1989: 29).

Other definitions are less extreme in requiring the agreement of all participants. For example, Saint and Lawson (1994: xii) require all legitimate concerns of individuals be addressed to reach consensus. Other definitions focus on a generally accepted outcome; for example, Auvine et al. (1978: xii) do not require all parties be completely satisfied to reach consensus. Gray (1989: 25) contends that consensus could be reached even though the outcome may not be their preferred one.

Some approaches integrate concern for both process and outcome. For example, Bradford (1976) focuses on the fact that the final decision is being influenced by every group member. Consensus as a process focuses more on interpersonal interactions and on members’ analysis and intuition (Schuman, 2005: 2). Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) contended that opinion developed within a group does not imply that group members have the same opinion:

‘In neither case can the final result be explained by the previous actions or opinions of individuals considered separately. In both cases the final result is a function of interactions which have as their by-product something which had not existed before.’ (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944: XXIV)

2.3.2 Norms in Consensus-building

Repeated interactions play considerable roles in the generation and development of norms (Sherif, 1936). Norms are created through repeated interaction and not ‘accidental or temporary interpersonal contacts’ (Cattani et al., 2008: 149). Thibaut and Kelley (1959) showed that a norm is a behavioural rule that is at least partially accepted by both members of the dyad or, in larger groups, by a majority of members, and is the result of repeated interactions (cited in: Cattani et al., 2008). Consensus is ‘strengthened by a trial-and-error process in which conformity to rules and agreements that have proved rewarding in past interactions is preserved in the future’ (Cattani et al., 2008: 149). Ground rules used by groups reflect those aspects within consensus processes:

‘Ground rules are often introduced by facilitators to make explicit their expectations regarding how a meeting should be conducted. Some would argue that ground rules, when used, should be formally adopted by the group, even if initially proposed by the facilitator. As such, these ground rules represent the group’s consensus on consensus. Ground rules may address the outcomes of the group’s work, but typically most relate to the processes.’ (Schuman, 2005: 2-3)

Mutual interactions of group members are ‘more powerful than other mechanisms in explaining the formation, change, and development of public opinion’ (Cattani et al., 2008: 150). As mutual interactions take place, a new distribution of articulate opinions and attitudes emerges or is reinforced (Cattani et al., 2008). ‘When no prior attitudes exist, mutual interactions will form definite opinions; when prior attitudes exist, mutual interactions will crystallize them’ (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944: 33).

2.3.3 Ambiguity and Uncertainty in Consensus-building

Uncertainty and ambiguity have been defined in a number of ways in the organisational literature (Schrader et al., 1993). Uncertainty definitions focus on the lack of information as a characteristic of uncertainty (Schrader et al., 1993). Galbraith (1973) defined it as the difference between the information an organisation has and the information it needs. Duncan (1972) added to the lack of information the difficulty predicting the influence of environmental factors on the

decision-making process. Decision-making exercises are ‘often carried out under conditions of ambiguity’ (Martin and Meyerson, 1988: 112). Schrader et al. (1993) contended that mental models used by participants in a decision-making process contribute to making difference between situations of uncertainty and ambiguity. Mental models guide individuals' behaviours, especially their problem solving behaviour:

‘In effect, managers (like everyone else) use their information to build mental models of their world, which are implicit synthesized apprehensions of how their organisations and environments function. Then, whenever an action is contemplated, the manager can simulate the outcome using his implicit model.’ (Mintzberg 1976: 54)

Mental models determine what is relevant for understanding a specific phenomenon or for solving a problem (Schrader et al., 1993). Ambiguity exists because the problem solver is not yet satisfied with his or her understanding of the structure of the problem and consequently of the problem-solving process (Schrader et al., 1993). Sutherland (1977) described problem solving as a process of uncertainty and/or ambiguity reduction. Reduction of ambiguity is the process by which a model considered to be appropriate to the problem is found or developed (Schrader et al., 1993).

Martin and Meyerson discuss the role of ambiguity in consensus. Ambiguity, they argue, permits dissensus to coexist with consensus, ‘since inconsistencies are checked by the appearance of consistency’ (Martin and Meyerson, 1988: 113). According to them, ‘managerial language serves as a lens for structuring perceptually what is fundamentally unstructured, thereby providing the psychological confidence necessary for the exploration of new courses of action’. According to Markell (1997: 391) there is no contrasting category called ‘action aimed at disagreement’. He found that action as illegitimate. Actually, there are examples from international negotiations showing that some actions do aim at promoting disagreement or are simply aimed at preventing an agreement from taking place.

2.3.4 Language and Cultural Issues in Consensus-building

Language has received relatively little specific attention in the literature on managing business across borders (Reeves and Wright, 1996). Barner-Rasmussen and Björkman (2005) slightly focused on some aspects of this issue. However, their focus was only on multinationals and specifically inter-unit language barriers. Language has been widely treated as part of cultural

differences in international management (Welch et al., 2005: 23). However, language is actually a separate issue which needs special interest. Though there is a considerable and growing literature on communication styles and negotiating styles in international business, few studies focus on those issues in meetings of international organisations. Further, there are limited studies on language issues within international meetings involving multiple stakeholders. There is though some literature about the influence of language on team work and relationships building (Hendersen, 2005:67). There are also scarce references about processes involved when team members within global multistakeholder groups communicate across different languages and cultures. As for the impact of language on decision-making, there is a study by Yoshihara et al. (2001). However, its findings are in the context of multinationals.

A study of 16,000 employees in 16 countries indicated that language similarities did not imply similar communication preferences (Zander, 2005). According to Hendersen (2005: 69), the term ‘language diversity’ refers not only to the fact that team members speak a variety of mother tongues but to the fact that they also hear in a variety of different ways. Relationships between expatriates and local staff are developed and maintained partly through language skills (Welch et al., 2005: 17). They also contend that individuals’ sense of belonging is affected by exclusion through language (Welch et al., 2005: 18). Proficiency in a language empowers some people in specific situations allowing them to control communication involved (Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999).

As for the impact of language on decision-making, Yoshihara et al. (2001) found that language barriers mainly lead to delays in decision-making and misunderstandings. Feely and Harzing (2003) used socio-linguistic theories to define the language barrier. Hendersen (2005: 66) found that both native and non-native speakers face many obstacles while using English as a language of communication within multilingual teams. Trust, team building and socialisation processes are among the main obstacles (Hendersen, 2005: 66). In summary, language and culture are separate issues to be considered in meetings of international organisations. The current study investigates how language and cultural issues contribute to consensus and leadership processes.

2.3.5 Emotions in Consensus-building

Until recently, Emotions have not been widely studied in a context of decision-making (Loewenstein and Lerner, 2003). Emotions were defined in the antiquity as ‘expressions of one’s moral stance towards an event’ (Spackman, 1999: 796). Current theorists consider emotions as personal responses to social interaction (Ekman, 1999). Frijda (1986: 458) explained the emotional process as ‘the situation when an individual is exposed to an eliciting stimulus, registers the stimulus for its meaning, and experiences physiological changes, with consequences on attitudes, cognitions, as well as facial expressions and emotionally expressive cues’. Izard (1977: 10) contended that emotions play a role in motivating and organising.

Emotions are understood as being socially constructed (Fineman, 1993). Emotions are most of the time relational in terms that they are experienced in the presence of others (Manstead, 2005). Indeed, emotions are not innate of a separate person (Domagalski, 1998). Actors in the interaction learn which emotions to show for every circumstance (Fineman, 1993: 16). Actors unconsciously learn through emotional violation the type of emotions to exhibit in the interaction for a specific situation (Domagalski, 1999).

Emotions’ dimensions cover the entire spectrum of human behaviour and interaction including organisations (Ashkanasy, 2003: 10). Ashkanasy (2003: 11) recognised five levels of emotions in organisations: within person, between persons, interpersonal interactions, groups, and organisation-wide. He contends that though emotions may have micro and macro dimensions, they are intensely personal. De Dreu et al. (2001: 205) consider group settings as an ‘emotional incubator’, where ‘the emotional states of the group’s members combine to produce an overall group-level emotional tenor that, in turn, affects all group members’. Kelly and Barsade (2001: 99) argue more specifically that teams possess an ‘affective composition’ or a ‘group mood’, which begins initially with the emotional characteristics of team members, and then develops through a process of ‘emotional contagion, entrainment, modelling, and manipulation of affect’. Zurcher (1982) argues that displays of emotion in group situations constitute an essential ingredient necessary for establishment of group cohesion.

Aristotle (1984) distinguished between positive and negative emotions. He cited fourteen types of emotions where seven emotions are the opposite of the other seven ones. Those emotions are

‘anger, calmness, love, hate, fear, confidence, shame, shamelessness, benevolence, selfishness, pity, indignation, envy, and emulation’ (Antoniadou, 2009: 4). Emotions which are associated with pleasure are labelled ‘positive’ and painful emotions are labelled ‘negative’ (Antoniadou, 2009: 5). Six of the emotions are related to the subject while the other six are related to the relationships of the subject with others (Antoniadou, 2009). Lawler (1992) contends that emotions as social processes contribute to the construction and sustainment of groups. In fact, group cohesion is impacted by positive or negative emotions (Ashkanasy, 2003: 33).

Studies on emotions and leadership are mainly situated at the entity level of leadership. According to Ashkanasy (2003: 34), actors in the interaction emphasise diverse quality relationships according to their interactions with the leader. Ashkanasy (2003: 34) argues that quality in the context of LMX relationships is an emotional judgment. Higher-quality relationships between leaders and members are related to positive emotions (Ashkanasy, 2003: 34). In contrast, lower quality-relationships are related to negative emotions (Kanter and Mirvis, 1989). Ashkanasy (2003: 35) argued that ‘individual differences in emotional intelligence may play a key role in the quality of leader-member exchange’. Some studies showed that groups could perform better when members exhibit emotional intelligence traits (Jordan et al., 2002: 369; Ashkanasy, 2003: 40).

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Organisational climate has been considered as the outcome of the mood of group members vis-à-vis their organisational environment (Reichers and Schneider, 1990; Ashkanasy, 2003). It is different from organisational culture as organisational climate is more about emotions while

culture is more embedded in the values and practices of the organisation (Ott, 1989; Schein, 1985). Organisational climate and culture have both connections with emotions (Ashkanasy, 2003: 38). Moreover, leaders play a significant role in impacting the emotional climate within a group (Ashkanasy and Tse, 2000).

In summary, consensus in the current study does not require the agreement of all participants. Both process and outcome of consensus-building are considered in the study of leadership. Norms in consensus-building are generated through interaction as well as being preconceived. Uncertainty and ambiguity are most of the time being studied as related to individuals facing those situations. Ambiguity in the current study seeks to shed light on the relational processes giving place or being created through ambiguity. Therefore, ambiguity in the current study could be a natural situation resulting from the natural interaction of individuals and groups. It could also be strategically generated to respond to specific strategic purposes of individuals or groups participating in consensus-building. In the current study, the focus will be on how language and cultural issues impact relationships in the group. This study looks at emotions as a relational phenomenon. It focuses more on the emotional climate and processes created during negotiations within a multistakeholder group. In this sense team emotional climate will be investigated.

2.4 Theories of Legitimacy

Various studies on legitimacy are concerned with what people ought to think and is legitimate (Zelditch, 2001: 33). The concept of legitimacy is involved in many different social processes and occurs at many levels of social organisation (Zelditch, 2001:34). Legitimacy has been recognised as a cornerstone of organisational theories attempting to explain organisational action (Scott, 1995). Most theories of legitimacy concentrate on legitimacy in politics and sociology and fewer studies have paid attention to legitimacy in organisations (Zelditch, 2001). In this literature review, I discuss the different theories of legitimacy and their application to organisational life and in particular to relational leadership. Furthermore, I examine how the legitimacy evident in political life may be transposed to organisational and especially multistakeholder settings. I focus on legitimacy as a process within the practices of relational leadership and concentrate on two of them: consensus-building and delegation to groups.

Different authors tried to define legitimacy. According to Zelditch (2001: 33) 'something is legitimate if it is in accord with the norms, values, beliefs, practices, and procedures accepted by a group'. Moreover, Parsons (1958: 175) defines legitimation as 'a process by which acts in specific, concrete situations are 'appraised' in terms of pre-given values, norms, and beliefs, and the pre-given values, norms and beliefs are 'grounded' in precise prescriptions understood within specific and concrete conditions'.

For Chakravarthy and Gargiulo (1998: 441), legitimacy is conceived as 'shared social norms or principles that condone a given distribution of power within a social relationship'. Kelman (2001) described legitimacy as an issue that arises in an interaction or relationship between two individuals and a group, organisation, or larger social system in which one party makes a certain claim, which the other may accept or reject. Acceptance or rejection depends on whether that claim is seen as just or rightful. Theories of justice and theories of authority recognise that 'is legitimate what is accepted as 'right' by winners and losers alike' (Zelditch, 2001: 38). The consequence in both cases is stability (Zelditch, 2001: 38). Blau's exchange theory of authority recognises 'collective benefit' as explaining legitimacy (Blau, 1963). On his part, Kelman (2001) contended that legitimacy can happen in a context of authority relations as well as in non-hierarchical relations.

2.4.1 Levels of Legitimacy

The generalisation of Linz's (1978: 73) 'operational criterion of legitimacy contends that legitimacy of any feature of a social structure is indicated by the fact that it is supported by those who have nothing to gain from it'. It may be the case also even by those who would benefit from some other structure (Ridgeway, 2001). Subsequent theory has further multiplied the objects, hence levels, of legitimation (Zelditch and Walker, 1984; Jost and Banaji, 1994). By now, legitimation encompasses acts, persons, roles, and rules, hence the structure of relations and groups themselves (Zelditch, 2001: 40). Legitimation plays a role of mediation between the structures of groups and the actions of individuals and vice versa (Zelditch, 2001: 51).

Modern theories of legitimacy consider different levels of analysis including micro, meso and macro (Lipset, 1959; Dornbusch and Scott, 1975; Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Berger et al., 1998; Ridgeway and Berger, 1986). This shows that legitimacy could be used to explain the stability of

social order at different levels of analysis and in different settings (Zelditch, 2001: 40). Therefore, I propose that leadership is maintained by a degree of legitimacy in all situations. I also consider legitimacy as an outcome of a certain consensus negotiated following the use of rules, power or both.

According to Weber (1968), legitimacy can at least be evaluated on two levels: one level concerns the legitimacy of the claim itself, or of the action, policy, demand or request that reflects that claim. The other concerns the legitimacy of the claimant, of the person, group, organisation, or larger social system that makes the claim or provides the backing for it. It is obvious that those levels are related to entity perspectives. The current study investigates the legitimacy in leadership processes by analysing acts and activities contributing to leadership as organising such as consensus-building and delegation to groups.

2.4.2 Norms in Legitimacy

Norms constrain behaviour (Zelditch, 2001: 49). Social actors do their best to look ‘right’ through being dependent on others for resources and rewards, success, and even survival (Zelditch, 2001: 49). This means ‘looking like others in the environment in which the actor is embedded, and so isomorphism of the actors of a system is the characteristic feature of any level of social system, whether group, organisational field, or world system’ (Zelditch, 2001: 49). However, isomorphism may be purely instrumental. Norms are not only constraining, they are also enabling (Zelditch, 2001: 48). The culture of a system is consensual but its use by actors is often strategic. Actually, actors do not need to internalize norms, values, and beliefs; they merely do in public whatever others expect them to do (Zelditch, 2001: 49). The foundation of social order is therefore a ‘system of consensually held cognitive categories’ (Zelditch, 2001: 49).

In reality, if there is legitimacy without norms, there are also norms without legitimacy (Zelditch, 2001: 49). This is because ‘there is nothing automatic about the translation of abstract values, norms, and beliefs into what is prescriptive in specific concrete situations’ (Zelditch, 2001: 49). Parsons argues that every situation of action is framed by a larger pre-given structure of norms, values, and beliefs. But the values, norms, and beliefs of this pre-given structure are too abstract, general, and incomplete to guide specific, concrete action in specific, concrete situations (Zelditch, 2001: 49). They are ‘indeterminate or flexible’ (Kelman, 2001).

There are two reasons why a concept of legitimacy is needed even if a concept of norms exists. One is that there is legitimacy without norms; other things besides norms become legitimate and other things besides norms create legitimacy (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). Norms are concerned with 'how interaction externalizes, hence 'objectifies' beliefs which for them 'constructs' what is 'real''. An especially important kind of belief in Berger and Luckmann's work is 'category beliefs', 'beliefs about identities, about kinds of people and their attributes which legitimise actions that are in accord with the actors' categories' (Zelditch, 2001: 48).

2.4.3 Legitimacy as Validation

Weber's (1968) theory is a mixture of consensus and conflict theories. The most famous concept in Weber's theory is his 'typology of rational, legal, traditional, and charismatic bases of legitimacy' (Zelditch, 2001: 44). Weber's theory is a multilevel theory that distinguishes legitimacy of individuals from that of groups. Validity which is the legitimacy at group level is also adopted at individual level by some authors (Zelditch, 2001: 44). Validity in Weber's theory implies that legitimation processes are collective rather than individual (Zelditch, 2001: 44). Therefore, validity could be relevant in investigating the plausibility and efficacy of legitimation within relational leadership processes.

Whereas Weber took validity as a given, Blau (1963: 308) used exchange theory to derive it from 'the endorsement of authority by subordinates through group gain arising from the capacity of authority to coordinate action'. Stinchcombe reformulated Blau's conceptualization of the role of subordinates by 'discounting their endorsement in favour of authorisation by other powers, both formal and informal' (Jost et al., 2001: 46). Dornbusch and Scott (1975) used these ideas to develop their theory of authority in organisations. Zelditch and Walker (1984) expanded on Dornbusch and Scott's theory and emphasised the collective level of legitimacy so that validity is seen as more important for stability than individual level of legitimacy (Zelditch, 2001: 45). Validity embeds the 'norms, values, beliefs, practices, and procedures of a group in a system of social controls', creating expectations of both authorization and endorsement if they are violated, which also counteracts pressures to change (Zelditch, 2001: 45).

Validation is a process, not just a state (Zelditch, 2001: 47). An act assumed to be coherent with norms and values is not enough to be valid simply because of not being contradicted by another

actor (Zelditch, 2001: 46). ‘Strong validation’ is sufficient, but it is not necessary (Zelditch, 2001: 49). What validation does is to construct the actor’s understanding of where ‘consensus’ lies in the group: ‘if an act presupposes consensus, the fact that others do nothing to contradict it is taken as confirmation of the consensus it presupposes’ (Zelditch, 2001: 46). Validation is vital because, without it individual-level legitimation is not sufficient to justify an act (Zelditch, 2001: 49). Nevertheless, the collective validation that is required can be purely tacit and yet has large effects on the stability of the social order (Zelditch, 2001: 46).

The theory of ‘accounts’ (Mills, 1940; Scott and Lyman, 1968) describes the mechanisms of the legitimation process. Mills (1940) ‘presupposes a pre-given structure of norms, values, beliefs, practices, and procedures that is, in Weber’s sense, valid’. The account’s function is to make ‘unexpected, untoward acts acceptable and normal, to others’ (Jost et al., 2001:50). The account will either excuse the behaviour, accepting that it is wrong but denying responsibility for it (Crandall and Beasley, 2001), or justify it, accepting responsibility for the behaviour but denying that it is wrong (Scott and Lyman, 1968). However, the process of negotiating acceptance of an account has as one of its outcomes the specification and elaboration of pre-given values, norms, beliefs, and practices (Zelditch, 2001: 50).

2.4.4 Leadership and Legitimacy in a Multistakeholder Context

2.4.4.1 Leadership in a Global Multistakeholder Setting

Authority granted to leaders within a global multistakeholder setting does not necessarily secure the approval of all their decisions (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). Therefore, the leaders need to take the interests of the most important stakeholders into consideration (Bendix, 1956). Stakeholder groups could attempt to get back the authority transferred to leaders in case their expectations and interests are not satisfied (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). Some stakeholders could respond to leaders’ failure to consider their interests by showing ‘passive resistance’ (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998: 442). Resistance could be developed into confrontation or even withdrawal from the organisation (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). This is consistent with Kelman’s (2001) ‘de-legitimation’ which creates pressures for reform and rebellion.

In actual fact, theories of legitimation are also theories of de-legitimation (Kelman, 2001). They specify conditions under which pressures arise to change existing structures. Injustice and other illegitimacies, understood as dominance not justified by status create pressures for reform or rebellion (Kelman, 2001). In the case of absence of legitimacy, the led or follower can be 'kept in line by instrumental incentives, such as expectations of gain (Kelman, 2001). Nevertheless, the promise of individual gain is also an insecure basis for social order because it leaves compliance to the personal preferences of the led' (Zelditch, 2001: 37).

The risk of alienating stakeholders by not satisfying their interests and expectations could be avoided when leaders have enough resources guaranteeing the non-defection of those stakeholders (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). The leaders generally act by either responding to the demands of unsatisfied stakeholders or simply relying on their inability to threaten the social order (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). The second option could work for some time but has the potential of building up discontent within the organisation (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). This could lead to considerable problems for the organisation whenever a crisis emerges (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998).

2.4.4.2 Legitimacy in a Global Multistakeholder Context

Leaders attempt to keeping control on the situation in periods of crisis by limiting the delegation of powers and using their utmost authority (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). In other cases, leaders could get into pacts with the different stakeholders (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). Pacts could serve to maintain social order in general and not only to balance between the different interests and expectations of the different stakeholders (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). Therefore, pacts play also roles of legitimation of leaders' authority within the organisation (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). Pacts give place to a setting where the different interests and expectations are moderated and balanced and all stakeholders allowed to participating in the decision-making process (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). The process of decision-making involving all stakeholders and their interests generates the legitimacy of the whole context where it takes place (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998).

In a transposition of legitimacy theory to organisational and leadership theories, Cyert and March (1963) proposed a coalitional model of legitimacy. The coalitional model recognises the

importance of stakeholder involvement but looks at it from the balance between ‘inducements and contributions’ (Cyert and March, 1963). The model also recognises the possible divergence in the goals between leaders and stakeholders (Coleman, 1990: 79). In actual fact, participation of stakeholders is not enough to legitimise the setting indefinitely (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). Kelman (2001) contended that legitimate demands by the state are typically reinforced by both coercive and persuasive means. Although state authorities could rely on legitimate influence, they usually recur to influence in the form of appeals to citizens’ personal preferences and interests (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). Citizens’ responses to state demands are also faster and more positive when they coincide with their own interests and preferences (Kelman, 2001).

2.4.4.3 Symbolic Modes of Legitimation

Knowledge utilization can occur in three different ways, which Pelz (1978) labelled the instrumental, conceptual, and symbolic modes. ‘Symbolic utilization is the use of information from the scientific realm to legitimise managerial decisions, actions, or ideas. Basically, organisation science theories and concepts are used by managers to ‘legitimate courses of action’ (Astley and Zammuto, 1992: 453). Managers often rationalize and justify their activities to others by pointing to a conceptual framework's abstract terms (Astley and Zammuto, 1992).

Bourdieu (1996: 291) contended that capital holders compete in the field of power over the most valued capitals in society. For Bourdieu (1996: 291), symbolic capital reflects the reputation and respect a person has in the field. Leaders attempt to dominate the social order by imposing their symbolic capital as the most legitimate (Swartz, 2008). In the current study on a multistakeholder group made up of experts from all parts of the world, symbolic capital as a mode of legitimation is likely to enrich the focus on leadership relational processes.

In summary, legitimacy is adopted as a phenomenon of ‘the social order’ in general. The focus is on the legitimacy of status in addition to the legitimacy of power and rewards (Berger et al., 1998), inequalities in general (Jost et al., 2001), procedures and procedural justice (Tyler, 2001), deviance and social control and change (Kelman, 2001), and almost any aspect of the relational processes related to leadership.

2.5 Delegation and Delegation to Groups

Delegation is a process that involves assigning important tasks to subordinates, giving them authority and responsibility to make decisions with or without getting prior approval (Yukl and Fu, 1999). It involves delegating new tasks to subordinates (Yukl and Fu, 1999). This gives subordinates more power and authority in taking action without getting approval from the manager (Yukl and Fu, 1999). It is though clear that delegation from a manager to a subordinate in a hierarchical organisation is not the same as delegation to individuals and groups in multistakeholder groups where the manager-subordinate relationship does not exist.

Many practitioner-oriented books and articles have been written about delegation for over four decades (Engel, 1993). Nevertheless, research on delegation and its determinants, conditions and outcomes is scarce (Hackman and Dunphy, 1990). Moreover, it has been noticed that most of research on delegation in organisations focuses on delegation to individuals and most has been conducted on delegation between a manager and an individual subordinate. Delegation is considered as an important factor in management effectiveness (Yukl, 1994).

The most comprehensive study on the determinants of delegation was conducted by Leana (1986, 1987). However, she only studied one type of manager in one organisation. A different research tested Leana's results which were based on a homogeneous sample of supervisors in one company (Yukl and Fu, 1999). Using a heterogeneous sample of managers, they were able to replicate most of Leana's key findings.

2.5.1 Reasons for Delegation

Delegation is considered as an attempt from managers to transfer responsibility to other organisational members without transferring real powers. Similarly, some organisational members may consider delegation as an illusion of power equalisation (Gemmill and Oakley, 1992). As delegation is an act which implies some sort of confidence and trust from the manager to the subordinate, there are cases when the manager delegates less to the subordinate.

There are two reasons for less delegation to a new subordinate:

‘First, a subordinate who is new to the job is likely to have lower job competence and less self-efficacy than one with considerable experience on the job. Second, most managers are reluctant to delegate much responsibility to a subordinate until the

person's competence and goal congruence can be assessed. Even if a new subordinate has prior experience in doing the job, the manager will want to determine whether the subordinate is dependable. Over time, more delegation is likely to be used with subordinates who are competent and dependable. The relationship is complicated by the fact that subordinates who have demonstrated exceptional competence are likely to be promoted, whereas incompetent employees are likely to quit or be dismissed.' (Yukl and Fu, 1999: 222)

The relationship between time together and consultation is less clear. Time together provides more opportunity to discover whether a subordinate is competent and has congruent task goals.

2.5.2 Consultation vs. Delegation

Delegation can be contrasted with consultation, which involves getting ideas and concerns from subordinates before making a decision that affects them (Yukl and Fu, 1999). Consultation may involve a single subordinate or multiple subordinates (Yukl and Fu, 1999). In multistakeholder groups, consultation could be with one individual or a whole group. With delegation, the authority to make a decision is turned over to a subordinate, whereas with consultation the authority is retained by the manager (Yukl and Fu, 1999). How much influence subordinates actually have is the primary distinction among different definitions of consultation. Some authors such as Vroom and Yetton (1973) and Vroom and Jago (1988) define consultation very narrowly to include only decisions for which the manager has much more influence than a subordinate; these theorists use a different construct such as 'joint decision-making' to describe decisions for which the manager and subordinate have more equal influence (Yukl and Fu, 1999: 220).

Although less empowering than delegation, 'consultation is also a form of empowerment because it provides subordinates influence over important decisions' (Yukl and Fu, 1999: 220). Consultation allows subordinates to express their opinions about issues they are concerned about (Yukl and Fu, 1999). The environment generated through consultation could enhance compromise even in the absence of goal congruence between managers and subordinates (Yukl and Fu, 1999). During the past half century there has been considerable research on participative leadership, but most of it examined consequences rather than determinants (Bass, 1990). Relatively few studies have been conducted to identify the conditions that predict how much consultation a manager will use with an individual subordinate.

One leadership theory appears especially relevant for explaining how managers vary their use of delegation and consultation across subordinates. The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory ‘describes how the dyadic relationship between a manager and a subordinate develops over time as a result of role-making processes and social exchange between the two parties’ (Graen and Scandura, 1987: 191). Subordinates showing loyalty towards managers are likely to be consulted more than others (Yukl and Fu, 1999). Alternatively, managers having trust in some subordinates are likely to delegate more responsibility to them than to others (Yukl and Fu, 1999). Several studies have shown that ‘LMX is related to outcomes such as subordinate satisfaction and performance’ (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Bauer & Green, 1996).

Consultation usually takes longer than delegation. Furthermore, ‘a manager who is overloaded with responsibilities may prefer delegation over consultation when a subordinate has high expertise and can be trusted to make a good decision’ (Heller and Yukl, 1969: 229). In the study by Leana (1987), there was a weak, negative correlation between subordinate competence and joint decision-making which is a strong form of consultation. According to the Vroom-Yetton model, consultation is more feasible when goal congruence is high, because a subordinate who shares the manager's task objectives is more likely to cooperate in providing the ideas and information needed to make a good decision (Vroom and Yetton, 1973).

In the current study within a multistakeholder group, consultation is a frequent and central requirement for a sound stakeholder balanced consensus-building. Therefore, I look at consultation as well as delegation processes. There are two types of consultation, formal and informal (Vroom and Yetton, 1973). Formal consultation happens when the leadership of the group needs to consult all or part of the group members (Vroom and Yetton, 1973). Informal consultation happens when leadership get advice or informal approval of stakeholder groups’ leaders or some other influential individuals or groups in the setting (Vroom and Yetton, 1973).

2.5.3 Delegation Practices and Organisational Outcome

There has been a perception that more delegation enhances productivity and performance (Bennis, 1989). However, research on the relationship between delegation and organisational outcome show a diversity of findings. For example, Schriesheim et al. (1998: 309) found that delegation was ‘positively related to subordinate performance and satisfaction’. Moreover, some

positive outcomes such as greater motivation and improved decision speed and quality were found to be highly linked to delegation (Yukl and Fu, 1999). Another study in Malaysia (Ansari et al., 2007) found that subordinates show affective commitment when experiencing delegation at work. However, Pellegrini and Scandura (2006) did not find any significant impact of delegation on job satisfaction. One explanation could possibly be that the Malaysian cultural context was different from the Turkish culture in which Pellegrini and Scandura's research was conducted.

2.5.4 Delegation and Leadership

There are few studies on the relationship between delegation and leadership in different business settings (Schriesheim et al., 1998; Pellegrini and Scandura, 2006). Research has shown that delegation works better in high quality LMX groups compared to low quality groups (Schriesheim et al., 1998). However, only a limited number of studies attempted to investigate the positive link between LMX and delegation (Liden et al., 2000). In addition, positive relationships between LMX and delegation were found in a study conducted in Turkey (Pellegrini and Scandura, 2006). Another study conducted in Malaysia, categorized as a large power distance and high collectivist society as Turkey (Hofstede, 1991) found that LMX and delegation had a positive relationship (Ansari et al., 2007).

Successful delegation depends on competence and sense of initiative of subordinates (Yukl and Fu, 1999). According to Vroom and Yetton (1973), it is not feasible to use delegation unless a manager and subordinate have the same task objectives. However, goal congruence was not correlated significantly with delegation in the study by Leana (1986). Yukl and Fu (1999) contended that the measure of goal congruence used was weak. Even so, it may be possible to achieve commonly assigned outcome objectives. Nevertheless, the quality of the outcome may be influenced by the level of consensus in the group.

In summary, most of the studies on delegation focus on the relationship between a leader and a follower or a dyad of followers. However, this research concentrates on delegation to groups by other groups and the dynamics and processes which govern it within the context of a global multistakeholder group. In a multistakeholder group, trust does not come into play between the delegating and the delegated groups. The current study also focuses on the delegation relational

processes contributing to leadership. Specifically, it looks at the reasons for delegating work in a global multistakeholder group and how. It also looks at the rules related to delegation in that context and all processes related to the dynamics happening within the delegated groups.

2.6 Summary of Chapter

Some entity perspectives to leadership involve processes. Nevertheless, they are considered as entitative as their focus is on the entity as a unit of analysis either being an individual or a group. Entity approaches to leadership have some alienating consequences; they make people deskill themselves and wait for an ‘extraordinary’ person to take initiative on their behalf. This study thus adopts relational and not entity perspectives to leadership. ‘Leaders’ are not identified as the basic object of this study. Leadership processes in this study are understood to be organising processes which involve all those who make salient contributions either in a constructed positive or negative way. Therefore, ‘activities and relationships provide the starting point for analysis’ (Hosking, 1988: 151).

Leaders, if we may call them as such, could be individuals or groups that do not necessarily have an official position or task or even play a role of first order in the process. It is enough that acts are socially constructed as having an influence on the social order to be considered as leadership. There could also be more than one individual or group contributing to leadership processes at the same time. Leadership processes could happen in different places and times and not necessarily within the setting or the boundaries of the organisation of focus.

Organising is understood to be ‘performed in interrelated social, cognitive, and political processes which reflect and affect differing and possibly contradictory values and interests’ (Hosking, 1988: 151). Therefore, attention ‘to organising is attention to activities and relationships and to their connections with sensemaking’ (Hosking, 1988: 151). Social order is dynamic and continuously changing but still contributes to stability at all times. Therefore, leadership involves a ‘collective negotiation of social order, including recipes for action, and the terms of exchange’ (Hosking, 1988: 154). Organising processes in this research are identified as being legitimacy, consensus-building and delegation to groups.

Consensus has been recognised as an outcome of decision-making. Some approaches integrate concern for both process and outcome. In the current study, consensus-building is understood as

a process of organising contributing to leadership processes. Consensus-building is fuelled with a set of norms continuously constructed and observed within processes of interaction. Consensus-building is complex when the target, outcome and procedure are ambiguous. Ambiguity and uncertainty provide a room for structuring acts and activities. It could be used as an instrument in consensus-building or just be the outcome of interaction. Language and cultural issues have an impact on organising acts and activities and thus on the leadership processes. Emotions are understood in this study as relational phenomena with more focus on emotional climate within groups and its impact on outcome. Consensus is also considered as a basic factor for legitimacy.

Legitimacy is understood as being validation of 'norms, values, beliefs, practices, procedures and structure relations' at a group level (Johnson et al., 2006: 55). An act or activity is legitimate if it conforms to norms, values, beliefs, practices, and procedures accepted or socially constructed within a group. It does not seek to solely legitimise individuals as such. Therefore legitimisation processes are collective rather than individual. Norms are not only constraining, they are also enabling. Norms or power or both are used to attain legitimacy. Validation could be openly or tacitly expressed. Stability of the social order is the consequence of legitimacy. Leadership processes are maintained by a degree of legitimacy at all stages. Legitimation of leadership processes in a global multistakeholder group could also be about de-legitimation. Legitimacy in a multistakeholder group could be reached when a balance between the demands of the different stakeholder groups is achieved. Participation of the stakeholders is not enough in securing legitimacy for the processes of organising contributing to leadership. Symbolic capital is widely used to legitimise organising acts and activities. In brief, this study is focusing on legitimacy of acts and activities contributing to leadership as organising such as consensus-building and delegation to groups.

Delegation consists of assigning important tasks to subordinates to make decisions with or without getting prior approval. Few empirical studies have been conducted about determinants, processes and outcomes of delegation. Moreover, most of the studies are on delegation between a manager and a subordinate. There is no specific study on delegation to groups in global multistakeholder groups. There are different reasons for delegation including shifting responsibility from management to organisational members. It could also be an attempt to generate the illusionary power equalization. Most of studies on delegation and leadership

consider it within the LMX theory. Studies on the relationships between delegation and organisational outcomes came to a diversity of findings. Other studies showed that same task objectives between the manager and the subordinate were found to be significant. Meanwhile, goal congruence was not significantly correlated with delegation. Finally, consultation which involves getting ideas and concerns from subordinates before making a decision that affects them could be formal or informal. The current study focuses on investigating processes encompassing delegation by a group to another group within a global multistakeholder group.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction to Chapter

The current study looks at relational leadership through the lenses of Relational sociology. Initially, institutional theory was considered as a theoretical framework. However, it was not possible to use it to uncover relational dynamics of leadership. Therefore, I needed a framework which would not be entitative but relational. Bourdieu's relational sociology and mainly his concepts of habitus, capital, field and practice offer a convenient framework for studying relational leadership processes by analysing organising acts of consensus, legitimacy and delegation to groups.

Section 2 of the chapter covers some of the substantialist perspectives in sociology. In substance, the limits of rational choices and moral action theories in addition to self-action and interaction theories regarding the study of relational phenomena are emphasised. The differences between substantialist and transactional approaches in sociology are also highlighted. This introduces us to the relational perspectives in sociology in section 3. This is followed in section 4 by Bourdieu's relational sociology and concepts of habitus, capital, field and practice. Section 5 outlines some empirical implications and uses of Bourdieu's relational sociology.

3.2 Substantialist Perspectives in Sociology

3.2.1 Rational Choices vs. Moral Action Theories

After Galileo's time, advances in physics and in the natural sciences 'eliminated most traces of self-action from the study of inorganic matter' (Emirbayer, 1997). In modern philosophy, however, the notion of self-action lives on in various doctrines and in liberal political theory. In the social sciences, it is still present in the form of 'methodological individualism' (Emirbayer, 1997). Rational theory assumes that actors have fixed interests and goals (Elster, 1989: 13). It also contends that individual human action is the core unit of social life (Elster, 1989: 13). Emirbayer criticised the concept of self-action in rational theory:

'To explain social institutions and social change is to show how they arise as the result of the action and interaction of individuals. When actors become involved with other actors whose choices condition their own, yielding results unintended by any one of them taken alone, rational-choice theorists make recourse to game theory. Here again, pre-given entities are seen to generate self-action; even as actors engage

in game playing with other actors, their underlying interests, identities, and other characteristics purportedly remain unaltered.’ (Emirbayer, 1997)

Bourdieu was also critical of models which consider human behaviour as being intrinsically rational and calculative. Jenkins summarised Bourdieu’s objections to rational choice theory as follows:

- ‘It substitutes an arbitrary rationality or interest, the pursuit of which is offered up as the well-spring of social life, for the culturally defined and historically variable rationalities and interests of real life;
- In doing so, it substitutes the social scientist’s analytical model for reality;
- In locating the dynamic of social life in individual and conscious decision-making it ignores the individual and collective histories which unconsciously generate the ongoing reality of that social life; and
- The methodological individualism of rational choice theory prevents a theoretical apprehension of the relationships between individuals and between individuals and their environment which are “the proper object of social science.’ (Jenkins, 2007: 73)

Bourdieu uncovered, through the concept of ‘habitus’, the methodological limits of rational choice theory:

‘Individual finalism, which conceives action as determined by the conscious aiming at explicitly posed goals, is a well-founded illusion: the sense of the game which implies an anticipated adjustment of habitus to the necessities and to the probabilities inscribed in the field does present itself under the appearance of a successful ‘aiming at’ a future.’ (Wacquant, 1989: 43)

Like rational choice theory, it understands individuals as ‘self-subsistent entities that follow pre-given and static norms’ (Emirbayer, 1997). It considers the inner forces driving individuals as the unit of analysis. Those individuals aspire to action according to their norms and beliefs (Emirbayer, 1997). Moral action, understood society as ‘a complex of interrelated actions that were more than the unintended interconnecting of self-interested actions’ (Emirbayer, 1997). The theory recurred to ‘Kant’s free and moral action to overcome the utilitarian limits of rational action’ (Joas, 1993: 246). Current forms of neo-Kantian perspective of moral action can be observed in critical theory, value analysis, and micro-sociology (Emirbayer, 1997). Rational choices and moral action theories are therefore excluded by Bourdieu as being the right methods to studying the dynamics lying within actions and processes.

3.2.2 Self Action vs. Interaction

Some self-action approaches consider self-subsistent societies, structures, or social systems as sources of action instead of individuals (Emirbayer, 1997). According to those approaches, reified substances such as groups, nations and cultures and also processes and structures are the ‘basic units of action and dynamics in social life’ (Tilly, 1995: 1596). Other theorists, such as systems’ theorists, contend that sociological inquiry would rather rely on emergent, durable and coherent entities than discrete entities which are making them (Tilly, 1995: 1596).

The interaction approach, which is frequently mistaken for a relational approach, understands thing as ‘balanced against thing in causal interconnection’ (Dewey and Bentley, 1949: 108). For this approach, the fixed and non-changing entities are not action self-generating; the entities are still understood to be independent of the others. Action takes place among the entities themselves (Emirbayer, 1997).

The idea of interaction is widely existent in current sociology as a ‘variable-centred approach’. Andrew Abbott (1988: 170) contended that variable-centred interaction approaches appear to be:

‘...A compelling imagery of fixed entities with variable attributes that interact, in causal or actual time, to create outcomes, themselves measurable as attributes of the fixed entities. What decidedly do not do the acting within this theoretical perspective are the substances in question; all of the relevant action takes place among them rather than it being generated by them. If anything, it is the variable attributes themselves that act, that supply initiative, in interactional research; disadvantaged position leads to increased competitiveness, for example, without any actor engaging in competitive behaviour. It is when a variable does something narratively that analysts think themselves to be speaking most directly of causality.’ (Abbott, 1988: 170)

The variable-centred researchers employ various quantitative methods to test their hypotheses. This includes ‘multiple regression, factor analysis, and event history approaches’ (Emirbayer, 1997). Self-action and interaction approaches still cannot take all the characteristics and determinants of dynamics related to interaction. The variable-centred approaches of interaction also fail to uncover relational processes.

3.2.3 Substantialist vs. Transactional Thinking

In sociology, authors distinguish between substantialist and transactional perspectives which refer to entitative and relational perspectives respectively within leadership research and organisation studies. According to Emirbayer:

‘Sociologists face a fundamental dilemma: whether to conceive the social world as consisting primarily in substances or processes, in static ‘things’ or in dynamic, unfolding relations? The key questions confronting sociologists in the present day is not ‘material versus ideal’, ‘structure versus agency’, ‘individual versus society’, or any of the other dualisms so often noted; it is the choice between substantialism and relationalism.’ (Emirbayer, 1997)

According to Elias (1978: 111), ‘substantialist thinking corresponds closely to grammatical patterns deeply ingrained in Western languages.’ Dewey and Bentley (1949:108) distinguish between two varieties of substantialist approaches; the first they term ‘the perspective of self-action’, considers things as acting under their own powers, independently of all other substances. The second, they term as ‘relational matrices’ within which substances ‘act, provide no more than empty media for their self-generating, self-moving activity.’ Dewey and Bentley see such a perspective as most characteristic of ancient and medieval philosophy:

‘Aristotle’s physics was a great achievement in its time, but it was built around ‘substances’. Down to Galileo men of learning almost universally held, following Aristotle, that there exist things which completely inherently, and hence necessarily, possess Being; that these continue eternally in action (movement) under their own power-continue, indeed, in some particular action essential to them in which they are engaged.’ (Dewey and Bentley, 1949: 110)

It is thus obvious that relational analysis engages with connections within and across organisations and with wider contexts (Mutch et al., 2006). The substantialist or entitative perspective considers that substances are ‘the fundamental units of all inquiry’ (Emirbayer, 1997). The substantialist perspectives are thus still not considering all aspects of relations. This leads us to look at relational perspectives in sociology.

3.3 Transactional Perspectives and Relational Sociology

Transactional perspectives, also labelled as ‘relational’, are described by Dewey and Bentley as being:

‘...where systems of description and naming are employed to deal with aspects and phases of action, without final attribution to ‘elements’ or other presumptively detachable or independent ‘entities’, ‘essences’, or ‘realities’, and without isolation of presumptively detachable ‘relations’ from such detachable elements.’ (Dewey and Bentley, 1949: 108)

The transaction as a dynamic process is the unit of analysis and not the entities contributing to it. Entities gain their being while interacting in the relations and not because of their independent original existence. According to Cassirer (1953: 36), ‘things are terms of relations, and as such can never be given in isolation but only in ideal community with each other.’ The transactional approaches gained momentum with the development of the new approaches in physics, mathematics, and the natural sciences:

‘Most strikingly, Einstein’s theory of relativity brought space and time into the investigation as among the events investigated and prepared the scene for the particle itself to go the way of space and time. These steps were all definitely in the line with the transactional approach: the seeing together, when research requires it, of what before had been seen distinctively in separation and held severally apart.’ (Dewey and Bentley, 1949: 112)

Michel Foucault (1979: 29) strengthened this orientation by asserting that:

‘The soul is not a substance; it is the element in which are articulated the effects of a certain type of power and the reference of a certain type of knowledge.’ (Foucault, 1979: 29)

Transactional or relational perspectives thus exclude individuals, society or even structures from being the unit of analysis in sociology. Individual persons, whether strategic or norm following, are embedded with the transaction they are related to (Emirbayer, 1997: 287). Structures also do not have a meaning separate from the units they are made of (Emirbayer, 1997: 287). They also involve a careful review of variable-based analysis and alternatives. The latter approaches separate entities from their contexts and relations, as contended by Somers and Gibson:

‘While a social identity or categorical approach presumes internally stable concepts, such that under normal conditions entities within that category will act predictably, the relational approach embeds the actor within relationships and stories that shift over time and space and thus precludes categorical stability in action. The classification of an actor divorced from analytic relationality is neither ontologically intelligible nor meaningful.’ (Somers and Gibson, 1994: 65-69)

Various statistical approaches attempted to improve variable based approaches by considering some situational contexts. Nevertheless, statistical models still cannot grasp the full meaning of

the relations because of their fundamental assumptions (Emirbayer, 1997: 289). Relational sociology could therefore be a convenient lens of analysis of interaction and leadership relations within the ISO 26000 WGSR. The challenge which faces me in this thesis is the way I bring a sociological perspective and a psychological perspective together. I found that Bourdieu's relational sociology and particularly his concepts of habitus, capital, field and practice had the potential to uncover the complex relationships of leadership in such a context.

3.4 Relational Sociology and Bourdieu's Concepts

In this thesis, I link Bourdieu's relational sociology and his three main concepts of Habitus, Capital and Field in addition to practice with theories of relational leadership. Swartz (2008) advances the idea that 'a Bourdieusian perspective would help to bring to the study of organisations a more sociology-centred understanding rather than the current economic tendencies brought by business schools.' In his work, Bourdieu:

'...does not offer a theory of fields, a theory of capital, or a theory of habitus, as stand-alone conceptual perspectives but it is rare to find all three master concepts integrated into a single study. Moreover, these concepts are seldom deployed within a relational perspective.' (Swartz, 2008)

Emirbayer and Johnson (2008) drew on all three pillar concepts to propose a relational approach to the study of organisations. They correctly locate the concepts within 'Bourdieu's general meta-theoretical perspective of relational analysis' (Swartz, 2008). A few research studies in the management and organisation literatures have sought to use these concepts in an integrated manner. In the conclusion to their study on improvisation in video production, for example, Pinnington et al. (2003) urge researchers to 'link minimal structures and their real-time actions to the broader context, particularly the relational structure of performance.' In the following subsections, I briefly describe the three concepts; habitus, capital and field in addition to the theory of practice.

3.4.1 Habitus

Social life according to Bourdieu's relational sociology is 'not simply the aggregate of individual behaviour' (Jenkins, 2007: 74). Practice also cannot solely be 'perceived through individual decision-making or through supra-individual structures' (Jenkins, 2007: 74). Habitus is supposed to overcome the opposition between subjectivism and objectivism. Habitus refers to a 'habitual

or typical condition, state, or appearance, particularly of the body' (Jenkins, 2007: 74). It is an 'acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted' (Bourdieu, 1977). The term habitus was used before Bourdieu by many authors including Hegel, Husserl, Weber, Durkheim and Mauss (Bourdieu, 1977).

Bourdieu's relational theory consists of three core concepts: social position, disposition and position taking. Pinnington et al (2003) argued that 'all social actors are continually situated in a 'social position' of super-ordinate, identical/similar or subordinate status in relation to others.' Furthermore, 'the dispositions and generative classificatory schemes which are 'the essence of the habitus are embodied in real human beings' (Bourdieu, 1977). This embodiment appears to have three meanings:

- 'First, the habitus only exists as it is 'inside the heads' of actors;
- Second, the habitus only exists in, through and because of the practices of actors and their interaction with each other and with the rest of their environment: ways of talking, ways of moving, ways of making things etc. In this respect, the habitus is not just manifest in behaviour; it is an integral part of it and vice versa;
- Third, the 'practical taxonomies' which are at the heart of the generative schemes of the habitus, are rooted in the body.' (Bourdieu, 1977)

Bourdieu used 'hexis' as another expression to signify 'the manner and style in which actors 'carry themselves'' (Jenkins, 2007: 75). The word 'hexis', though originally Greek, is similar in meaning to the Latin 'habitus'. This similarity indicates the centrality of the body to Bourdieu's conceptualization of the habitus' (Jenkins, 2007: 75). It is 'in bodily hexis that the 'idiosyncratic' or the personal combines with the systematic or the social' (Bourdieu, 1977). It is 'the mediating link between individuals' subjective worlds and the cultural world into which they are born and which they share with others' (Jenkins, 2007: 75).

Bourdieu considered the habitus as 'the actors' embodied practical knowledge and comprehension of the world' (Pinnington et al., 2003). For Bourdieu, the basics of the habitus are 'imprinted through the body in a socializing or learning process which starts from early childhood. The habitus is inculcated as much by experience as by explicit teaching' (Jenkins, 2007: 76). Jenkins (2007: 76) considered Bourdieu's habitus as being mostly unconscious:

‘The power of the habitus derives from the thoughtlessness of habit and habituation, rather than as a result of consciously learned rules and principles. Socially competent performances are produced as a matter of routine, without explicit reference to a body of codified knowledge and without the actors necessarily knowing what they are doing.’ (Jenkins, 2007: 76)

Habitus is also understood as a ‘set of dispositions and inculcated values which serve to demonstrate how people’s subjectivity takes on a particular social persona and relation to others. The slowly evolving, durable habitus becomes an objective social structure for oneself and others’ (Pinnington and Gray, 2007). Dispositions within the habitus have been understood as ‘attitudes’ (Robbins, 1991). Nevertheless, they could also include a ‘set of cognitive and affective factors’ (Jenkins, 2007: 76). According to Bourdieu (1977: 214), ‘the word ‘disposition’ has three distinct meanings; it is the result of an organising action, it is a way of being and it is a tendency or inclination’. Bourdieu refers to the existence of dispositions as being ‘beyond consciousness’ (Jenkins, 2007: 76-77). However, Bourdieu (1977: 74) states that each agent is a ‘producer and reproducer of objective meaning’. The outcome is that practices ‘are produced by dispositions which are less than conscious’ (Jenkins, 2007: 77). Practices are thus the result of the ‘intersection between the habitus and its dispositions, on the one hand, and the constraints, demands and opportunities of the social field on the other’ (Bourdieu, 1977). This happens through ‘the subjective process of adjustment of the habitus and practices of individuals to the objective and external constraints of the social world’ (Jenkins, 2007: 78).

The habitus as a ‘shared body of dispositions, classificatory categories and generative schemes’ is argued by Bourdieu furthermore to be the ‘outcome of collective history’ (Jenkins, 2007: 80). However, it cannot be considered as solely ‘the cumulative collective wisdom of the group. History in the making is experience as the taken-for-granted, axiomatic necessity of objective reality. History is an ongoing set of likely outcomes’. These are, however, the product of ‘what people do’ (Jenkins, 2007: 80). In turn, practices are said to be the product of the habitus:

‘History tends to repeat itself and the status quo is perpetuated. This process of cultural and social reproduction is responsible for the apparent continuity and regularity of social structure. For this purpose, the relationship between the probabilities of the objective world and the subjective dispositions of the habitus ought to be understood. The habitus is the source of ‘objective’ practices, but is itself a set of ‘subjective’ generative principles produced by the ‘objective’ patterns of social life.’ (Jenkins, 2007: 82)

The habitus, ‘once acquired, underlies and conditions all subsequent learning and social experience’ (Jenkins, 2007: 79). This raises the issue of the possibility of change, both at the individual and the collective levels. According to Bourdieu, the habitus is ‘the site of the internalization of reality and the externalization of internality’ (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977: 205). He ‘also talks about the dialectical relationship between the objective structures and the cognitive and motivating structures which they produce and which tend to reproduce them’ (Bourdieu, 1977: 83). Elsewhere, the habitus is ‘objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted’ (Bourdieu, 1977: 54). ‘The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus’ (Bourdieu, 1990a: 53).

3.4.2 Capital

According to Bourdieu, ‘fields have a structure and a distribution of capital’ (Swartz, 2008). He divided capital into two major symbolic forms: ‘economic’ and ‘cultural’ (Pinnington et al., 2003). Capital ‘does not only entail material things but a wide variety of power resources that can become both the objects and instruments of struggle in fields within and across organisations. The concept of capital has seldom been employed within a relational perspective’ (Swartz, 2008).

Bourdieu believed that the different forms of capital are convertible (Swartz, 2008). He also takes into consideration economic and social capital in the constitution of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984: 75). According to him, social capital is:

‘...the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition - or in other words - to membership in a group - which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a ‘credential’ which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word.’ (Bourdieu, 1986)

As for symbolic capital it ‘is made up of resources available to a social actor on the basis of prestige or recognition, which functions as an authoritative embodiment of cultural value’ (Bourdieu, 1984). He also contended that ‘Differences in cultural capital mark the differences between the classes’ (Bourdieu 1984: 69). I concentrate in this thesis on social and cultural forms of symbolic capital, and consider image and reputation also as sorts of capital. I also look at capital as a legitimising factor of domination (Swartz, 2008).

3.4.3 Field

Bourdieu's concept of field could be situated in different levels of analysis and organisational settings (Swartz, 2008). Field positions 'can be occupied by individuals, social networks, social groups, institutions and formal organisations' (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008). I could add that informal organisations could also be fields of activity. Bourdieu's field concept applies to both specialist and popular activity within society (Bourdieu 1984; 1996). Fields can also be within one institution or related to many institutional contexts (Swartz, 2008). He considered fields as being hierarchically organised (Bourdieu, 1983). In this sense, we could consider that informal multistakeholder settings, though not traditionally hierarchical, as disposing of structures which could be considered hierarchical for Bourdieu's research purposes. This is because fields are not meant to be organisations or organisational structures but fields of 'specific types of struggle' (Swartz, 2008). Fields are always in interaction with each other:

'They interrelate and cannot stand completely alone, because they operate according to a measure of the autonomy accorded to them in their relations to other fields. Their autonomous principles of operation constitute a game and its stakes have to be observed if one wishes to participate in the game and be recognized by others.'
(Pinnington et al., 2003)

Fields have a 'structure and a distribution of economic and cultural capital' (Prior, 2000). Bourdieu contended that actors compete for capital in the fields of their activity:

'These fields are configurations of relationships in which positions are defined by the distribution of capital in different forms across the actors in a field'. Some actors have more capital and so are dominant over those with less; others may have equal but different compositions of capital at their disposal which puts them in a different relationship to other actors and the field itself. The actor's position is historically determined: that stock of capital has been accumulated or reduced over time through exchanges which are shaped by the existing relationships and by the rules of the game.' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992)

Field's structure is derived from 'oppositions which in turn always have a dominant and a subordinate pole' (Abbott, 2001). This implies that 'the very dimensions of fields are defined by relations of domination' (Abbott, 2001). The field of power is 'a macro-level arena of struggle across a range of power fields' (Swartz, 2008). The field of power is 'a space of struggle within an organisational unit and in the wide setting where the purpose is about setting the most legitimate form of capital' (Swartz, 2008).

3.4.4 Bourdieu's Theory of Practice

Practice, in Bourdieu's sociology, is located in space and in time which is 'both a constraint and a resource for social interaction' (Jenkins, 2007: 69). Therefore, an analysis of practice as a social phenomenon needs primarily a focus on time as a basic feature (Jenkins, 2007: 69). Practice also happens with experience and accumulation (Jenkins, 2007: 70). According to Bourdieu:

'The practical mastery of the logic or of the imminent necessity of a game is a mastery acquired by experience of the game, and one which works outside conscious control and discourse.' (Bourdieu, 1990a)

Bourdieu noted that people and their actions make part of the circumstances in which they interact (Wacquant, 1989). People fail to perceive social reality with the development of their practical cultural capital (Jenkins, 2007: 69). Social capital cannot be understood on 'the basis of rules, recipes and normative models' (Bourdieu, 1977). Pause, interval and indecision as situated in time could be used as strategic resources (Jenkins, 2007: 71). Actors use their own understanding of reality to orient their practice towards their goals and interests (Jenkins, 2007: 71). Practice is offered as the result of learning processes which are neither conscious nor unconscious (Bourdieu, 1990a). In brief, practice proposes that 'individual action is shaped by aspirations that are themselves guided by objective conditions in which they occur' (Pinnington et al., 2003).

Bourdieu developed the notion of 'strategising' as a link between his concepts of practice, habitus and field. Strategies are, according to Bourdieu, 'the ongoing result of the interaction between the dispositions of the habitus and the constraints and possibilities of the social field' (Jenkins, 2007: 83). Strategising involves rational calculation but with consideration of the constraints of the field (Jenkins, 2007: 83). In addition, not all actions are strategic. Bourdieu offers strategising as a relational concept which does not have a conscious calculative individualist meaning (Jenkins, 2007: 83). According to Bourdieu, 'strategy is shaped first by individuals' dispositions and, second, by aspirations afforded in the structure of relations within and between fields' (Bourdieu, 1990a: 130).

In summary, the concepts of habitus, capital and field in addition to practice have relevant qualities to explain relational processes of leadership within a global multistakeholder group

made up of experts and practitioners working together in different environments in order to produce a standard on social responsibility.

3.5 Theoretical Implications of Relational Sociology

The relational approach has a wide range of implications in the study of social sciences either for levels of analysis, or methodologies or concepts such as power and agency.

3.5.1 Power as a Relational Issue

For entitative perspectives, power is an entity or something an individual or group have or detain. However, for the relational approach:

‘...the concept of power is transformed from a concept of substance to a concept of relationship. At the core of changing figurations- indeed, the very hub of the figuration process- is a fluctuating, tensile equilibrium, a balance of power moving to and from. This kind of fluctuating balance of power is a structural characteristic of the flow of every figuration.’ (Elias, 1978: 131)

Power in relational terms, is understood as ‘an outgrowth of the positions that social actors occupy in one or more networks’ (Knoke, 1990). Bourdieu argued for a relational approach of power:

‘By field of power I mean the relations of force that obtain between the social positions which guarantee their occupants a quantum of social force, or of capital, such that they are able to enter into the struggles over the monopoly of power.’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 220)

Therefore, power in Bourdieu’s understanding is not a property of actors but emerge from the relationships they are involved in (Emirbayer, 1997: 292).

3.5.2 Agency as a Relational Issue

The relational agency considers agency as making part of the dynamics of situations (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998). According to James, agency entails:

‘...the engagement by actors of different structural environments which both reproduce and transform those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations. Viewed internally, agency involves different ways of experiencing the world, although even here, just as consciousness is always consciousness of something.’ (James, 1976)

Agency therefore entails concrete transactions through which ‘actors can enter into relationship with surrounding persons, places, meanings, and events.’ (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998)

3.5.3 Application of Relational Perspectives to Methodological Inquiry

The relational perspective has shown to be pertinent in my study focused more on a face-to face setting. Goffman contended that what is important in face-to-face interaction was ‘the syntactical relations among the acts of different persons mutually present to one another’ (Goffman, 1967: 2). Goffman (1967: 3) asserts that face-to-face encounters are about locating regularities, patterns and mechanisms across relational processes at the meso level. At the micro level, the individual is also re-conceptualised from a relational point of view. Individuals’ identities and interests need trust and recognition which come into existence only during the relational processes (Pizzorno, 1991: 218):

‘The fiction of individuals not yet involved in social relations but originally knowing what their interests are and what the consequences of their choices can be discarded in favour of a view in which the interaction between persons mutually recognizing their right to exist as the only originally conceived reality. No pre-established interests are imagined. The individual human agent is constituted as such when he is recognised and named by other human agents.’ (Pizzorno, 1991: 220)

Therefore, individual identities get their identification in a sort of ‘circles of recognition’ while interest could be the result of those relational processes (Pizzorno, 1991: 219; Emirbayer, 1997: 29).

3.6 Summary of Chapter

In summary, relational perspectives have the potential of representing more comprehensive reality of the configuration of relationships within a context. Relational perspectives, in addition to other perspectives, ‘complete the picture of understanding the world’ (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). It allows the integration of internal perspectives to the ‘externally based research in science’ (Wilber, 1996). It also adds ‘personal and interpersonal research/practice to more traditional, multi-personal research endeavours’ (Torbert, 1997).

Bourdieu’s concepts are offered as relational concepts which are interlinked. Habitus and field and capital are all required to link micro and macro levels of analysis (Swartz, 2008: 50). Practices flow from the intersection of habitus with capital and field positions (Swartz, 2008: 50). Bourdieu’s focus has been on the emergence of order from practice, ‘not through commitment to pre-established goals but emergent from the flow and flux of practice’ (Bourdieu, 1990a: 50; cited in Mutch, 2006).

Chapter 4: Methodology and Methods

4.1 Introduction to Chapter

This study uses grounded theory methodology to examine the context, form and dynamics of relational leadership within a global multistakeholder group. The objective is to develop an explanatory account and grounded theory of the processes of construction and deconstruction of leadership. The research uses qualitative methods to document and interpret the dynamics and processes of legitimacy, consensus and delegation to groups in the ISO 26000 WGSR. I was in this study a complete participant observer actively contributing to the work of the ISO 26000 WGSR. At the same time, I was taking research field notes and interpreting them while considering the methodological limits involved.

4.2 Grounded Theory as Methodology

Glaser and Strauss (1967) showed that grounded theory was ‘descriptive, explanatory and predictive’. They consider grounded theory as being better equipped to represent a ‘comprehensive picture of reality’ (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This is due to the grounded processes through which grounded theory is conceptualised and presented. Glaser and Strauss (1967) offer a ‘methodology for structuring data collection and analysis allowing researchers to ‘ground’ theory from their qualitative data’. Grounded theory offers rigorous procedural criteria for theory construction and a clear set of principles for their evaluation.

4.2.1 Main Characteristics of Grounded Theory Methodology

May (1986: 153) proposed three characteristics for a successful grounded theory; first, the theory should be dense; Second, the theory should be clear; Third, the theory should lend new insight into the phenomenon under study. The difference between a grounded theory approach and the more traditional approaches to qualitative research is that a grounded theory strategy is not built upon absolutely fixed and pre-determinate processes or steps. Rather, it represents a methodology for continuously redesigning the research in according to concepts grounded during the study span (Battersby, 1981).

In grounded theory methodology, empirical data serve to ‘identify and interrelate with concepts driving the theory development’ (May, 1986: 146). Grounded theory is often used for

‘preliminary, exploratory and descriptive studies, where little research has been done and further investigation may be required’ (Battersby, 1980). The theory is ‘therefore the product of empirical data-driven processes’ (Battersby, 1980). The method through which the data drive the theory creation is referred to by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as ‘grounding the theory in the data’. Due to this continual ‘grounding’ process, some authors claim that the theory more accurately reflects the data (Corbin, 1986: 92). However, I would contend that the grounded theory is one representation of the data. This is consistent with Corbin’s (1986: 94) definition of a grounded theory category as an ‘abstraction of phenomena observed in the data’.

A diversity of data collection techniques can be utilised within grounded theory. This could be achieved through observation of interacting individuals and groups, interviews, questionnaires, and analysis of documents. In addition, it is also possible to observe and document unanticipated events and consequences. Moreover, there are ways through which data overload can be minimised. Glaser and Strauss (1967) recommend that as soon as categories of information reach saturation, then no further data need be collected. Saturation is, literally, a saturation level of supporting data.

4.2.2 Main Steps in Grounded Theory Development

In order to get used to the research environment, I had to identify my predispositions from the start and review them continuously (Battersby, 1981). This allows the reader of the research to be able to better understand the circumstances in which theory was developed. Grounding theory requires four steps (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). In the beginning of the study, some initial categories from available data are extracted. For my present research, I recognised leadership and social responsibility as the key concepts in the initial stages. With the development of the data collection, I changed the focus of the research more towards relational leadership in a global multistakeholder setting. The second step consists of comparing categories as more data is collected. This could be done by encoding the data. The third step consists of collecting more data for each category identified till ‘saturation’ (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The last step consists of grounding the theory from the categories developed.

The grounded theory process relies on two major components (Glaser and Strauss, 1967); the first is ‘theoretical sampling’ which is guided by an analysis of the initially collected data and the

emerging theory. The second is ‘continual comparative analysis’ where data collected is continuously and systematically organised and categorised. As data collected for each category is growing, a frequency count can be made of the number of subjects from which similar data was obtained. Data gathered in this way can be quantified and the properties which emerge can be given a classification as to their level of generalisability. This process may be repeated at each stage of the major reviews of the data. The issue with this method is that some researchers reject the validity of counting frequencies of instances of categories and sub-categories in qualitative data.

In my current study, I used this strategy of counting frequencies but with some accommodations. I may have considered some categories for analysis even though they had less frequency than others and vice versa. I felt that the process of grounded theory as part of qualitative research depends more on my embeddedness in the setting. I know better about issues which may have more significance on the topic of study than abstract frequencies. I presume that the subjective side is always present in a qualitative research study.

4.3 Methods: Participant Observation

Traditional science assumes that research should be conducted on phenomena that can be seen, weighed, measured and tested (Lastrucci, 1963; Chalmers, 1999; Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). However, scholars now argue that an ‘exclusively external focus offers only a partial view of reality’ (Bateson, 1972). In order ‘to resolve the issue of partiality, scholars suggest that in addition to studying explicit behaviours and visible social structures’, we also need to study internal phenomena, including ‘tacit beliefs and invisible behavioural structures that influence personal, interpersonal, and multi-personal relationships and processes’ (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000).

Identifying invisible, underlying values and beliefs is tantamount to understanding the externally expressed structures and strategies in organizations (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). Methodologically, this identification process requires intensive ethnographic and interview-based methodologies (Barley 1990). Several qualitative approaches, including participant observation, have been described as capable of uncovering the invisible assumptions that

generate social structures (Schein, 1985). This identification process seems to be suitable for my qualitative research of relational leadership.

4.3.1 Participant Observation as an Approach

4.3.1.1 Pertinence of Participant Observation Method for Relational Perspectives

Taking a relational orientation means enacting a constellation of research values and interests in which organizational phenomena and the researcher's relationships with these phenomena is conceived of as interdependent and intersubjective (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). Relational systems' thinking allows researchers to study not just observed systems but also the observing system, the context from which knowledge emerges (Montuori and Purser, 1996). In this way, a relational approach can focus on the integration of the observer into the process of knowing (Keeney, 1983; Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000) and on understanding the extensive interdependencies within and between organizations and the environments in which they are embedded (Shrivastava, 1995; Dyer and Singh 1998).

Approaches that attend to relationships have often been labeled postmodern, qualitative and post-positivist (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). Actually, discovery is facilitated by becoming part of the system (Keller, 1985). Truly, it is through interconnectedness that knowledge is generated (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). All organizational phenomena are interconnected, and while one certainly does not wish to unendingly study all interconnections, the numerous pathways of interdependence among and between social phenomena and their systemic contexts ought to be kept in mind at the outset of one's research (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000).

4.3.1.2 Rationale for Adoption of Participant Observation

I chose to use an ethnographic process for my research for various reasons. Among those were the goal and methods of ethnography, which I found parallel to my own process of engagement (Dobbert, 1982). Ethnography is a research style in which 'messy experience is sorted into patterns of structure and concept' (Wolf, 1992: 129). Ahmed and Shore (1995: 15) suggest that a 'relevant goal for postmodern ethnography is making sense of the fragmentation, chaos, and crises of identity we see on individual, community, and cultural levels'. Participant observation is considered as a starting step for ethnographic inquiry (Schensul et al., 1999). The purpose of participant observation is to 'develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena under study that is as objective and accurate as possible given the limitations of the method' (DeWalt and deWalt,

2002: 92). This focus is clearly relevant to my study, which attempts to make sense of the complexity of a global multistakeholder setting.

Postmodern ethnographic fieldwork has been described as ‘confrontation and dialogue between two parties involved in a joint creation of otherness and selfness’ (Dwyer, 1977). Furthermore, ethnographic method involves ‘immersion into a field, followed by a repeating cycle of observation and recording, alternating with reviewing and organisation of the information into a framework, with some assessment of the process and generation of new questions brought in as the research proceeds’ (Corbin, 1986: 98). This is an adequate model for my process of participating, for four years, in the meetings of the ISO 26000 WGSR and IDTF, writing detailed, often verbatim reports and diaries, and discussing those observations, feelings and interpretations with my research supervisor.

4.3.1.3 Approaching Participant Observation

Participant observation has been defined as ‘a method in which the researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture’ (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002: 1). The explicit is part of what is known and which is easy to communicate about while the implicit is out of reach of consciousness (Spradley, 1980). Spradley referred to participant observation as a general approach of fieldwork in ethnographic research (Spradley, 1980; Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002). Participant observation allows the researcher to directly understand the interaction as it happens in the setting (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). Participant observation is essentially a form of "storytelling" (Daft, 1983). The first stages of observation allow the researcher to screen the events in the setting and to shortlist those that are worth investigating (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). The different perspectives considered such as the description of events and of people’s behaviour and relationships provide a more comprehensive picture about the topics to be studied as Bourdieu contended:

‘The program of observation is ‘a protracted and exacting task that is accomplished little by little, through a whole series of small rectifications and amendments inspired by what is called le métier, the “know-how”, that is, by the set of practical principles that orient choices at once minute and decisive.’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 228)

Participant observers attempt to avoid imposing their own biases by observing a situation from the participants' perspective and by using standardized methodologies for analyzing qualitative data (Sanday, 1979). The outcome of their observations is an accurate description of reality from a participant's perspective (Astley and Zammuto, 1992). It is still accepted that participant observers bring their values and cultural background into the research setting. Their observation field notes necessarily reflect their cultural and linguistic background as Geertz portrays it:

‘The ability of anthropologists to get us to take what they say seriously has less to do with a factual look... than it has with their capacity to convince us that what they say is a result of their having actually penetrated (or, if you prefer, been penetrated by) another form of life, or having, one way or another, truly 'been there.' And that, persuading that this offstage miracle has occurred, is where the writing comes in.’ (Geertz, 1988: 4-5)

Similarly, observation often leads to new concepts within an organization science language game as Galbraith (1980: 162) commented:

‘I know of no new form of organization that was invented by organization theorists while advancing the theory. I have seen no new form emerge from the test tubes of organization theory. Instead, the researchers record what the inventive practitioner creates and give it labels like grids, system 4, or matrix organization.’ (Galbraith, 1980: 162)

Once labelled, organization scientists model and examine relationships among newly observed organizational phenomena, tying them into the existing theory base. This theorising results in broader and richer views of emerging phenomena, views that are often disseminated back into the managerial language game (astley and Zammuto, 1992).

Pinnington et al. (2003) contends that ‘participant observation perspectives are particularly important when seeking to capture subjective understandings in improvised performances’. Actually, participant-observers change from being ‘actors engaged in the real scene to viewers of videos or reviewers of written diaries reflecting on past experiences. The meaning of experience evolves and changes with repeated viewings and readings and discussions’ (Pinnington et al., 2003). This is what exactly happens to a participant-observer; more understanding of the setting and its dynamics results from longer and repetitive interaction between the observer and data viewed and reviewed (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Furthermore, 'the individuals' knowledge and understanding of the experience is inevitably transformed as the event changes, from enacted performances to an event in short-term memory, and then to one that is part of long-term memory and influenced by a particular mode of review and reassessment' (Pinnington et al, 2003 : 165). According to Harrison and Young (2005 : 51), 'dynamic structures of speech and memory differ significantly from their static structures'. Therefore, I carried out an analysis of every set of my data; the observation diaries of the interaction, the speeches of participants and their email exchanges and some of the written memos and notes relating to the organisation and the functioning of the ISO 26000 WGSR and sub-groups (Putnam and Fairhurst, 2001; Van Dijk, 1997; Woodilla, 1998).

4.3.1.4 Types of Participant Observation

Gold (1958) distinguishes between four types of participant observation identities: complete participant, participant as observer, observer as participant and complete observer. I will limit my focus in this sub-section to complete participant status because it is the one that applies to my situation in the current PhD research. It is a situation where the participant has no access problems as a consequence of being a member or part of the setting studied. The complete participant is defined as someone who operates under a cover in the field hiding the purpose of observing the setting from participants (Burgess, 1984). According to Bourdieu:

'It is thus in reference to a somewhat glorified and rather unrealistic notion of research that some would express surprise at the fact that we should discuss at such length apparently negligible details such as whether the researcher ought to disclose his status as sociologist or take the cover of a less threatening identity (say, that of ethnographer or historian) or hide entirely.' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 228)

In my case, I was a participant in the ISO 26000 WGSR before I developed interest in observing the setting as part of my research project and was not hiding my status as a researcher. In this kind of research, the researcher's experience and observation is accepted as a source of data (Brewer, 2000). Among the shortcomings of complete participation are the potential risk for objectivity and the ethical issue of disclosure of the identity of the participant as a researcher (Gold, 1958). In this situation, it will depend on how the researcher will take those shortcomings into consideration while reporting about his/her participation (Merriam, 1998).

4.3.1.5 Conducting Participant Observation

Conducting efficient participant observation is based on building up good relationships between the researcher and actors in the interactions (Whyte, 1979). A participant observer focuses on issues that are related to the research question. However, research questions are not always handy in participant observation especially in the early stages (Merriam, 1998). Nevertheless, the researcher can generally try to figure out what is happening in the setting and try to ask questions why that is happening. Over a certain period of time, she/he can be able to define events or behaviours that are repetitive (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002). After screening the first field notes for exceptions and unrelated matters, she/he can focus his/her observation on those specific issues (Wolcott, 2001).

Access to a chosen research setting can be difficult or impossible at times. The researcher is required to choose the site where to conduct observation, gain permission as necessary, target potential informants and get used to the research setting (Spradley, 1980). In the case of my participation within the ISO 26000 WGSR, I had to negotiate access as a participant and not as a researcher. Once in the field, I did not have difficulty observing, interacting and collecting data without experience any interference from anyone. Socialisation plays an important role in getting the researcher to get closer to actors in the interaction and facilitate data collection (Bernard, 1994). Over time, researchers as they build trust and rapport with actors in the interaction, they start being considered as part of the setting (Burgess, 1984). In exchange for the trust they get from actors in the interactions, I consider that researchers need to use their judgement in publishing any data, either text or digital, that could jeopardise others' privacy or interests.

Analysis of data collected through participant observation is carried sequentially (Becker, 1958). The researcher starts the analysis data while still collecting data but the final analysis is carried on once data collection is completed (Becker, 1958). The three stages of field analysis are: 'the selection and definition of problems, concepts, and indices; the check on the frequency and distribution of phenomena; and the incorporation of individual findings into a model of the organisation under study. The fourth stage of final analysis involves problems of presentation of evidence and proof' (Becker, 1958: 653). The last stage involves validating data and consideration of 'the character of conclusions and deciding on the kind of evidence that might cause their rejection' (Becker, 1958: 659).

4.3.1.6 Limits of Participant Observation

Participant observation has limits as well as advantages as a data collection strategy. My role from the beginning has been as a complete participant since I did not have any considerable access problems by being a member of the ISO 26000 WGSR before starting my research project. Walsh (2004) cited some of the limits of participant observation and particularly the complete participant:

- participant observation requires a huge effort from the participant
- the ethical issues related to the role of the researcher and relationships with actors in the interaction.
- the researcher could be biased towards all or part of actors in the interaction or the environment
- the researcher could take pragmatic positions to maintain his/her position
- the researcher could avoid focusing on issues that are relevant for his/her research in order to fit a position as a participant or to maintain participation
- the researcher could start identifying himself/herself with actors in the interactions
- The chain of human relationships developed could push the researcher to focus more on participation rather than on research.

In my case, I was fully involved in the interactions to the level that the tension and enthusiasm related to interaction distracted me from taking notes or focusing more in deep on specific events, behaviours or situations (Patton, 2002). Nevertheless, those situations were not lasting for a long period of time. To overcome some of the limits, I used more than one source of data collection or what social scientists call ‘triangulation’ (Denzin, 1989: 178). Further response to the limitations could be by starting, early on in the process of observation, a reflexive analysis of the role of the researcher as related to actors in the interaction to the research setting (Spradley, 1980).

4.3.2 Reflecting on my Participant Observation Experience

The purpose of this section is to give a full explanation of how my roles evolved as a complete participant and as a researcher within the ISO 26000 WGSR, how I came to hold the different positions, how I overcame challenges of access and what impacts the changes of lenses related to

my roles had on my research. Therefore, I will relate my voice as a participant from an internal perspective explaining what it was like to be at the ISO 26000 WGSR meetings, what it meant to participate and what should the reader understand by what it is that was being said by others? Self-reflection is an opportunity for the observer to look at factors that may have influenced the quality or the quantity of data collected such as the nature of interactions between the researcher and informants and the choice of informants to be retained etc., (Brewer, 2000). Further description of the development of my roles and relationships within the ISO 26000 WGSR can be found in chapter 5: 'Introduction to Data Analysis Chapters' and in my own interpretation of diaries in chapters 6, 7 and 8.

4.3.2.1 My Journey within the ISO 26000 WGSR

My PhD research experience was exciting because it involved research as well as professional work aspects. I started with contributing to part of the ISO 26000 Moroccan mirror committee as a labour representative. As an employee representative within the Moroccan Ministry of Finance and union leader within the union I was member of, I was nominated to represent my union in the Moroccan Mirror Committee in January 2006. Other factors also played in favour of my nomination such as my ability to read and write text in English, having just returned from Aston Business School, England after finishing my MSc in Human Resource Management. Countries that used to join the ISO 26000 WGSR were required to form what is called a Mirror Committee; a committee supposed to be made of six stakeholder categories: Government, Labour, Industry, NGOs, Consumer and SSRO (Services, Support, Research and Others).

I could not participate at the ISO 26000 WGSR Lisbon meeting in May 2006 because I could not afford travel expenses. The Moroccan Mirror Committee secretariat taken over by the Ministry of Trade and Industry were not transparent enough about sponsorship opportunities provided by the ISO DEVCO. Actually, I think that I would never have participated in any of the meetings of the ISO 26000 WGSR if I did not have the opportunity to start my PhD research at the Robert Gordon University. First of all I was a civil servant in the Moroccan ministry of Finance; I would not have got approval for travel for all if not even some of the meetings. Second, I would not have got funding for travelling. Being outside Morocco helped me a lot negotiate the situation. ISO DEVCO was funding two members of the Moroccan committee and therefore I don't think I would have ever managed to get funding from ISO.

The first event that had a major influence on my future as a member of the ISO 26000 WGSR was the Casablanca, Morocco ISO 26000 workshop for Arab countries in November 2006. I participated at that workshop as a union representative. No other representative of the other main four Moroccan unions was at the meeting although they were invited. The event turned out to be a good opportunity for getting to know some of the ISO leaders and Arab ISO 26000 representatives. First of all, I met the Director of Training in ISO who would play a significant role in my integration into the ISO 26000 later in Sydney before he moved to another International Organisation in 2007. I also met the chair of TG4, Alex, who will become chair of IDTF later in the process. The Casablanca Workshop was my first gateway to the ISO 26000 WGSR community.

The second meeting that had a major effect on my integration into the ISO 26000 WGSR was the ISO 26000 WGSR Sydney, Australia meeting in late January and early February 2007. Initially, I started my research with an initial title: Leadership in corporate social responsibility in the Oil and Gas Industry. After some extensive research on leadership, corporate social responsibility and on ethics I adjusted my focus towards leadership in corporate social responsibility in the Middle East and North Africa. It is true that my PhD funding was based on investigating leadership in corporate social responsibility. However, I could not recognise how I would approach leadership in a global multistakeholder group. I started by reviewing literature on the traditional trait perspectives to leadership. My supervisor, Prof Ashly Pinnington, encouraged me to attend the ISO 26000 WGSR meeting in Sydney and collect as much field notes as I could. He helped me secure the amount for the flight ticket from Aberdeen to Sydney from RGU. I was supposed to cover all other expenses. It was only in Sydney that the ISO Director of Training, who I met in Casablanca, provided me with some pocket money (in an envelope), that was supposed to be handed to a representative from Lebanon who did not manage to attend the meeting, which assisted me for covering the remaining expenses. I also made a strategic decision by deciding to go there although I was not sure about its financial consequences. In summary, Sydney was a kind of first access to the research setting.

It was also in the Sydney meeting that I started understanding some of the meanings of field notes and research diaries. I was not acquainted with participant observation as a data collection method before starting my PhD research. I personally took field notes while interacting with the

rest of members. The ISO 26000 WGSR offered a wide setting for the study of diverse organisational phenomena such as discourse, language issues, cultural issues, negotiations, leadership, collaboration and communities of experts, etc. When I started collecting field notes, I did not have any idea about what exactly from those phenomena I would focus on. Therefore, the outcome of Sydney meeting in regard to field notes was limited compared to the breakthrough in accessing the field. I considered that first experience as a period of acclimatisation and familiarisation by disregarding the field notes from Sydney (Burns, 2000).

With the flow of field notes and their initial analysis, I started noticing that the setting was so complex for a simplistic study of leadership as traits of individuals with ‘extraordinary’ skills influencing subordinates. It was not appropriate to focus on the relationship between an individual leader and another individual or a dyad of individuals. Initially, the structure of the setting was not a simple organisational unit as normally recognised. Second, there were no manager-subordinate relationships as such in the setting. Third, influence was practiced by individuals and groups without necessarily holding leadership positions. That was when I started reading and reviewing literature on leadership as a process of organising focusing on the relational processes socially constructing leadership. Further field notes showed that the organising processes impacting leadership in the ISO 26000 WGSR were consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups.

After the Sydney meeting, I almost lost the opportunity to attend the other ISO 26000 WGSR meetings (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). As I represented one of the five main trade unions within the mirror committee in Morocco prior to starting to PhD research, it was through labour that I joined the ISO 26000 WGSR in January 2006. I was the only applicant representing labour from Morocco to apply to attending the ISO 26000 WGSR meeting in Sydney. The ISO decided to select me because they seek balance of stakeholder representation. Further, English language was an additional factor that played in my favour, as ISO requires participants to speak English to be able to attend meetings. However, one Moroccan Union representative sent a message to the labour group in Sydney meeting claiming I had no right in being represented in the ISO 26000 WGSR meetings since I was a student and also a member of a non-representative union in

Morocco¹ I insisted on being a ‘genuine’² union representative and thus was able to attend all Labour stakeholder group meetings in Sydney. Immediately after the Sydney meeting, the other unions contested my participation by complaining to the Moroccan Minister of Trade and Industry who subsequently launched an investigation.

It was clear that my participation in the ISO 26000 WGSR was thus far extremely jeopardized. To sort out the issue, the five unions held a meeting where they had to decide on the representation of unions. They decided that representatives of every two unions could alternately attend one meeting of the ISO 26000 WGSR. Consequently, I could not have been able to represent unions at the meetings of the ISO 26000 WGSR for at least two consecutive meetings. That would have meant the end of my access to the research setting for my PhD research purposes. Fortunately, there was a vacancy within the SSRO stakeholder group in the Moroccan mirror committee. Therefore, my application to represent Researchers (SSRO) within the Moroccan mirror committee was approved. In summary, gaining status as an SSRO member gave me the opportunity to interact more fully and strategize in the ISO 26000 WGSR and IDTF than in Labour. Following the initial participant observation conducted in Sydney, Australia, I recognised certain phenomena and issues worthy of consideration for my research. Therefore, issues of leadership, discourse, delegation, interaction, institutionalisation, ethics and social responsibility have been given some attention while commenting on quotes and events in this diary.

The ISO 26000 WGSR Vienna, Austria meeting in November 2007 was the first main venue for my participant observation. After having read extensively on participant observation as a method on field notes collection and diaries, I was able to grasp some of the very decisive moments in the meeting. The heated debate that accompanied the creation of IDTF and move from Working Draft to Committee Draft in Vienna was a fertile environment for observation of leadership relationships and dynamics. I also had the opportunity to express myself more freely, being a member of the SSRO group, as compared with being member of Labour. I also was able to

¹Especially that the union I represented has not been member of the International Trade Union Confederation and has not got its membership yet as of March 2011.

² In reality, I had been active in one union since I started working full time in 1997. I then moved to the union in question in 2002 and became the secretary general of the union within the department I represented. Therefore, the information the Moroccan union leader sent to the labour stakeholder group in Sydney was wrong either because of simply not knowing anything about me or because of his rejection of the union I represented. In actual fact, there are countries that send representatives as representing Labour while they are not.

secure my membership in IDTF as an observer for ATTF. Although Alex, the new leader of IDTF, was unwelcoming and unsupportive towards participation of observers at the first meeting of IDTF in Vienna, the French representatives and mainly Marc managed to make him reverse his decision. They decided that observers would not be able to speak in IDTF meeting unless it was for the specific purpose of issues related to language. This rule was not always observed as can be read in the data analysis chapter but it at least responded to facilitating my research role.

My status as an observer in IDTF provided me with more time and freedom to observe scenes and take notes as they happen. This allowed me to collect a huge amount of data ranging from conversation among team members to interaction with other team members to at the spot interpretation of decisions, positions and emotions. Therefore, I could collect more relevant data in IDTF meetings in Paris, France in January 2008 and in April 2008 in Cape Town, South Africa. In the last meeting, as the venue was in a remote vineyard area outside Cape Town, my relationships and conversations with IDTF team members substantially improved leading to improved field notes. In general, the Cape Town meeting allowed better interactions and socialisation among the IDTF team members due to the laid back environment which led to a significant harmonization of the team climate.

The following meeting of the ISO 26000 WGSR in September 2008 in Santiago, Chile was an opportunity to sustain relationships and data collection. In a meeting of the ISO 26000 WGSR I participated in the following sub-meetings: the workshop for developing countries, FTTF, ATTF, SSRO, plenary meetings (opening, closing and one in the middle), the joint task groups 4, 5 and 6, in addition to the meetings of group 6 on implementation. My participation at the IDTF meetings in Potsdam, Germany in October 2008 and Bahrain in April 2009 were an opportunity to collect further data and clarify research issues grounded from data. The ISO 26000 WGSR meetings of Quebec, Canada in May 2009 and Copenhagen, Denmark in May 2010 and IDTF meeting in Tokyo, Japan in July 2009 served more to validate some early findings and sustain trends of theory grounding.

4.3.2.2 Access Issues

Being a member of the working group and of the integrated drafting task force, I did not experience any considerable problems of access. However, there were many other issues which

could be considered as barriers of access to the research setting such as visas for countries where meetings were held, funding and membership status issues.

Ethnographers 'give great consideration to how a research site is selected, and how, when, and to whom they initially present themselves at that site' (Wolf, 1992). In my case, I was privileged since the beginning of my research for having been already a participant-member of the ISO 26000 WGSR. Consequently, I did not have to go through the process of negotiation of my participation there (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). I had only to secure and maintain my access through a set of actions that decisions and through maintaining high quality relationships with key figures in the field (Barley, 1990; Geertz, 1983). It was only afterwards that I realized that 'entry into the field was a critical component of the ethnographic process' (Smith and Kornblum, 1996). I myself saw and talked to another researcher who was denied access to the meetings of the ISO 26000 WGSR and IDTF due to not being a member of those groups (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Another access challenge that I faced was simply entry clearance or visa to countries where meetings are held. Not having a barrier for access to the research setting was downgraded with encountering recurrent visa problems. As the meetings were taking place in different countries, international travel was required. As a Moroccan passport holder, I was required to get a visa for most countries where meetings were held. I could not get a timely visa for some countries and therefore missed attending IDTF meetings in New York (July 2008), Cape Town (March 2010) and ISO workshop in Egypt (October 2008). It is likely that most of the access issues' literature has been written by developed countries scholars who, in general do not need to obtain a visa for short-term visits to many countries across the world. I assume that a large number of researchers from developing countries fail to collect data or attend academic settings in different countries due to difficulties relating to visa requirements and formalities.

Another potential barrier to access to the setting was securing funding for travel. As the meetings were taking place in different parts of the world, funding from RGU or from my own savings was limited. Fortunately, ISO DEVCO started paying for my travel costs from the ISO 26000 WGSR Santiago meeting in September 2008. Nevertheless, that was at the expense of the Moroccan representative of the government stakeholder group; ISO DEVCO was funding two representatives from Morocco. Therefore, when they started funding my participation, they

ceased funding the representative of the Moroccan government and continued funding another NGO representative. In reality, ISO always wanted to empower non-governmental representatives in that process. Due to this, the Moroccan Ministry of Trade and Industry, playing the role of secretariat of the Moroccan mirror committee, and did not include my name in the list of representatives in the ISO 26000 WGSR. I had to use my relationship with the Secretary General of the union I belonged to contact the Moroccan Prime Minister and the Minister of Trade and Industry before my nomination for the Santiago meeting was approved.

At a later stage, and after I built up a strong network within the ISO 26000 WGSR, I no longer needed the approval of my nomination by the Moroccan Ministry of Trade and Industry to get funding from ISO DEVCO to attend IDTF meetings. It also became only optional since ISO automatically funded my participation for Quebec and Copenhagen meetings. There was though another small funding challenge related to participation in IDTF in its early stages but which I could overcome with persistence and perseverance. Since I was an observer in IDTF, there was initially no specific funding for observers. I had to cover my own expenses for the first IDTF meeting in Paris. Funding was only made available after I had lobbied with other colleagues to get funding for representatives of developing countries in IDTF for subsequent meetings.

4.3.2.3 Developing Trust

Participant observation methods place the researcher directly in the context of the phenomena of interest, such that contextual factors are fully accounted for and added into the content of the research (Eisenhardt, 1989). This approach, which can be used to collect qualitative as well as quantitative data, is highly interactive involving the researcher and those s/he studies. Moreover, in some measure, its success is based on the quality of relationships developed during the research (Barley, 1990). The more trust and closeness that emerges through the ongoing interactions, the richer the data and more complex the findings will be. Being involved in the ISO 26000 WGSR process, I was able to build a strong network of relationships for the purposes of participation. The same network served as a context for my research. I did not therefore seek to develop special relationships or networks just for research purposes.

Many theorists 'have described how to develop trust within long-term ethnographic research' (Geertz, 1983). In the case of my participation in the ISO 26000 process, I developed close

relationships with a wide range of stakeholders in the whole group, and members of IDTF in particular. The relationships made me aware of different perspectives and visions they held on the process as a whole. Further, as a participant, I was involved in lobbying and strategising and negotiating processes. I was elected as a representative for Arab countries in IDTF in 2007 in Vienna, Austria due to the trust that was credited with, then as a coordinator of African countries in 2008 in Santiago, Chile. In addition, I was elected as a member of the Post Publication Organisation (PPO) representing the community of researchers and consultants (SSRO) in 2010 in Copenhagen, Denmark. My active participation in the process may have influenced the orientation and choices of my study and my relationships with other participants (Bosk, 1996: 130).

In the case of my participation in the ISO 26000 process, I have taken it as a case study of the dynamics of leadership and legitimacy in a global multistakeholder setting. I have developed close relationships with a wide range of stakeholders in the whole group. Moreover, I have developed closer relationships with members of the ISO 26000 WGSR. This allowed me to be aware of the perspectives and vision of each to the process as a whole. My involvement in the ISO WGSR and my establishment as a player among others to a certain extent facilitated my observation and strengthened trust in me from other actors in the interaction, as Bourdieu contends:

‘The structure of a field, understood as a space of objective relations between positions defined by their rank in the distribution of competing powers or species of capital, is different from the more or less lasting networks through which it manifests itself. It is this structure that determines the possibility or the impossibility of observing the establishment of linkages that express and sustain the existence of networks.’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 114)

Actually, I cannot confirm that I was trying to sustain my position in the process and strengthen trust in me as a way to serve my research or vice versa. What I was doing was playing my role as a participant as I saw it as a participant. At the same time, I was conducting my research while not deceiving anyone into serving my own ends. It is most of the time possible that trust developed in the field helps the purposes of research as well as the politics and positions of the complete participant. I would not deny that my research outcome would not respond to some of my specific interests that might preserve or increase my capital in the field (Bourdieu, 1991a:

12). It is obvious that as a member of the ISO 26000 WGSR, I was struggling with other members with whom I had some sort of capital and preferences in common and therefore we had to compete for the limited resources in the field (Bourdieu, 1998: 25).

4.3.2.4 Implications of my Roles within the ISO 26000 WGSR on my Research

My participation within the ISO 26000 WGSR involved playing several roles according to circumstances. Among the roles I had to play was a labour representative, an SSRO representative, a developing countries group member and forum facilitator, a member and representative of the Arabic Translation Task Force, and a member of the French Translation Task Force and observer in IDTF. Bourdieu called researchers to avoid the ‘scholastic fallacy’ by exploring their scientific practice and be as reflexive as possible by analysing their subjective relation to the social world and its impact on their theorising (Özbilgin and Tatli, 2005). The aim is ‘to transcend the duality between objectivism and subjectivism and to unveil social reality, which is hidden by presumptions’ (Özbilgin and Tatli, 2005: 859). Thus, it is certain that I had to adapt myself to the situation every time I had to play one of the roles. This would have had some kind of influence on the research choices I made, the interactions I transcribed to my data and the conclusions I came to. Therefore, this sub-section will look at some subjective issues that I could have overseen while collecting, analysing and interpreting data.

Bourdieu’s understanding of participant observation supposes an ethnographer playing the role of completely being part of the studied setting and thinking like its members (Collins, 1984). I consider that my experience as a complete participant-observer within the ISO 26000 WGSR is similar to that understanding. However, it seems quite difficult to understand the way people think even when you spend years with them (Bateson, 1972). I could simply develop one understanding among others (Lastrucci, 1963). Bourdieu also considered informants’ statements as having limited value (Jenkins, 2007: 56). Indeed, relying on informants’ statements about what they do would not produce little more than ‘a sociological version of official accounts’ (Holy and Stuchlik, 1983). Therefore, relying more on field notes relating observations of behaviours, reporting about the questioning of the dynamics in the research environment in addition to my own interaction with members would draw a slightly more comprehensive picture of reality (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

The role of the social scientist, as Bourdieu perceives it, is to unmask the reality residing behind discourse, narratives and accepted social perspectives (Jenkins, 1992). Thus, I chose to differentiate between observation and interpretation in my notes (Higgins, 1996). Those distinct categories were labelled field-notes and head-notes respectively (Ottenberg, 1990). I understood the interpretation cycle to take place during my entire participation by alternating between the interpretation of data collected and generation of questions (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In ethnographic terms, I would record field-notes, and only then make head-notes in which I would attempt to organize my data, and create and adjust my own conceptual framework to fit it (Alaszewski, 2006). I would then return to the next meeting or talk to one of the participants in order to collect more data and confirm some assumptions (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This conforms to the 'hermeneutic' analysis and natural history methods favoured by ethnographers (Dobbert, 1982; Ely, 1991).

There have been many questions that have been raised by Bourdieu's experience with participant observation (Jenkins, 2007: 56) and which I consider still apply to my current research. For example, the cultural and social distance required between the participant-observer and actors in the interaction in order to achieve an 'epistemological experience' similar to Bourdieu's. Another question is about the epistemological claim of objective legitimate knowledge generated from the setting by a member in the setting observing it. That is why I considered having a reflexive account on my research experience. That would clarify my methodology and the modes through which I produced text (Frangie, 2009: 221). In the end, research reports the world as seen filtered through a researcher's eyes regardless of the method employed, converting the debate between positivists and antipositivists into a clash between seeing things as one would have them rather than seeing them as they 'really are' (Geertz, 1988: 9).

For example, there has been some heated debate about Bourdieu's political involvement and its impact on his academic work (Swartz, 2003; Frangie, 2009). A few researchers considered that involvement as compromising scientific integrity of the researcher (Verdès-Leroux, 1998; Karakayali, 2004). The value of Bourdieu's reflexive sociology has been questioned as he did not break with science and epistemology while being a vocal public intellectual. Other opinions and perspectives on research methodology do not see the problem as being insurmountable

between active involvement and maintaining academic rigour (Frangie, 2009). According to Bourdieu:

‘The political field can be described as a game in which the stakes are about the legitimate imposition of the principles of vision and division of the social world’ (Bourdieu, 2000:67)

Political action starts with a questioning of the accepted social order leading to the suspension of adherence to ‘the common representation of the social world’ (Fritsch, 2000: 17). It is a sort of ‘epistemological break’ with familiar conceptions of the world (Özbilgin and Tatli, 2005: 859). Therefore, I had to break, to a certain extent, from my primary experience as a research participant and from my own presuppositions (Özbilgin and Tatli, 2005: 859). I had also to ‘break the relationships that are most apparent and most familiar, in order to bring out the new system of relations among the elements’ (Bourdieu, 1991b: 14). The question that has been posed regarding Bourdieu’s reflexive sociology is whether it is something limited to the scientific field or a general principle that can occur in any field (Mouzelis, 2007). Social analysis has been considered as a mechanism to manage the scholastic bias resulting from a political field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). It is obvious that my own participation has many similarities with Bourdieu’s. The outcome of my research is definitely influenced by my roles as a participant in the ISO 26000 WGSR. However, I tried my best to nuance between judgements related to politics in the process and to my research. It is not easy to claim that it is easy to tell exactly where the limits of politics and research are.

It is obvious that the fieldworker is subject to ‘self-exposure, self-reflection and self-doubt’ (Bosk, 1996: 130), and is affected by ‘the physical, relational, and emotional realities of the setting as they exist for members’ (Dobbert, 1982: 103). Bourdieu also highlighted ‘the danger of over-identification of participant-observers with their informants’ (Collinson et al., 1990). This is however, difficult to observe in some situations. It is thus expected to face a challenge in making a difference between the participant and the observer. It is also difficult for the fieldworker to set a defined relationship with informants or actors in the interaction³ (Smith & Kornblum, 1996). According to Frangie (2009):

³ I prefer to call them ‘actors in the interaction’ than informants because the last concept is limited in its focus and extent compared with the variety of sources and information the fieldworker collects.

‘Bourdieu’s ontology is not characterized by a state of radical contingency, but by social constraints and necessities; what characterizes individuals in Bourdieu’s world are not their unique way of dealing with one’s ‘blind impress’, but on the contrary, their homogenous responses to their social conditioning.’ (Frangie, 2009:221)

Therefore, my interpretation of events and grounding of data is not a creation or a discovery but a combination that involves me as an individual, the setting and the individuals I was interacting with (Bourdieu, 2004). Moreover, my own perspective is not simply my own point of view but ‘an analytic disposition that is part of and formed in and by the “collective unconscious”—habitus—of an academic field (Kenway and McLeod, 2004: 529). The extent to which my research was influenced by my position in the field depended always on a combination of agency and constraints that depended on the context in which the interactions were taking place (Bourdieu, 2004; Friedland, 2009). As Brubaker writes,

‘social research is governed and informed by internalized dispositions, not by codified propositions, by the practical logic of the habitus, not by the theoretical logic set forth in treatises and textbooks’ (Burbaker, 2000: 34).

It is true also that my research outcome will reflect to a certain extent my social environment and cultural background (Reed-Danahay, 2005). Nonetheless, I strived all the time to observe some sort of objective perspective as related to the issues studied. This is consistent with Bourdieu’s conception of ‘individuals as producers of social practices in social space while following specific logics of practices. They are using their respective capitals – economic, cultural, and social – that are acknowledged as symbolic capital in the respective fields. (Chudzikowski and Mayrhofer, 2011: 22). In order to overcome the historical element that may have dominated my thinking, I tried to engage myself in what is called ‘participant objectivation’ by reflexively applying scientific methods related to participant observation (Özbilgin and Tatli, 2005).

To sum up, reflexivity for Bourdieu is ‘an examination of the “epistemological unconscious” and the “social organization” of the discipline’ (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 40). My purpose on going through the reflexive process is thus to explore the ‘unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predetermine the thought’ (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 40). The point was to avoid looking at all actors of the interaction only from my point of view as if the models I constructed to understand relational leadership in a global multistakeholder group, according to

my perspective, would be the main determinants of relational leadership I was researching (Bourdieu, 1990).

4.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Data is analysed at the same time that is collected (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Questions that arose from the data collected, led to the collection of further data to fill in the gaps and this extended the theory development (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Once those uniformities in groups of categories are discovered, resulting in a smaller number of higher level concepts, the theory has to be delimited (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This is the stage when the researcher decides to end data collection and is called theoretical saturation (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Data collection in this study is under the form of field-notes or diaries.

4.4.1 Data Collection

Diaries are used by social researchers to ‘overcome the bias resulting from recall or memory problems’ (Alaszewski, 2006: 26). Diaries also help ethnographers reflect on the development of their understanding and relationship with the setting studied (Alaszewski, 2006: 26):

‘Researchers using naturalistic techniques often do not start with a hypothesis to test; instead they begin with something they do not understand, a puzzle about certain patterns of behaviour. Generalization does not take the form of making statistical inferences about the characteristics of a population from a representative sample, but rather consists of gaining insight into social processes and the rationality which underpins observed actions and events.’ (Alaszewski, 2006: 48)

Researchers differ in the degree to which they want to control the type of information recorded in their diaries (Alaszewski, 2006: 66). Some choose to use highly structured diaries. Others take freedom in designing their own diaries (Alaszewski, 2006). I chose to follow the second example for my current research. I have been attending the meetings of the ISO 26000 WGSR and the IDTF and observing the events and recording them verbatim as possible. I read the diaries later and added some dated side notes to help me understand further the context of the event and record the time of my formal analysis and reflection (Alaszewski, 2006).

My typical diary is chronologically organised according to the dates from the first meeting to the last meeting daily (Alaszewski, 2006). Break and socialisation opportunities are also commented as part of the diaries (Alaszewski, 2006). They include quotes from group members and my

comments in addition to my interpretation of events, discourses, decisions, body language and positions (Van Dijk, 1997). In this instance, I began to recognise the bias related to my personality as an active participant in the group and therefore may have influenced the interpretations that I gave to some events (Woodilla, 1998).

My data analysis makes reference to sections of diary, comment on that and potential additional comments (Alaszewski, 2006). The reference includes the name of the diary, the page and the event related to the diary entry and the date and sometimes explanation of the circumstance of the diary entry (Alaszewski, 2006). Quotes from diaries are put in *Italic* preceded by a reference to the page and diary and situation (Alaszewski, 2006). The diary section is in *Italic* and may be followed by a further explanation or analysis of the diary section or related activities or phenomena (Alaszewski, 2006). In addition, some margin comments may have been added.

4.4.2 Analysis of Data and Interpretation

4.4.2.1 Data Analysis Methods

Consensus-building in the ISO 26000 WGSR is found to be slightly different from consensus-building in a professional group. Within this group, the multistakeholders' characters vary in terms of cultural, linguistic, and geographical identities and roots. The uniqueness about this process is that it can be defined as a decision-making process rather than a process of progression towards agreement and consensus. For purposes of data analysis in this PhD thesis, I used diaries from the meetings of the ISO 26000 WGSR of Vienna (November 2007), and IDTF meetings in Paris (January 2008), Cape Town (April 2008) and Bahrain (April 2009). I also analysed and completed my information from the other diaries in addition to exchanges of hundreds of emails between members of the working group and other sub-groups (Putnam and Fairhurst, 2001). I had also recorded tapes of some IDTF teleconferences. However, I could not directly use them as I did not get prior consent for that from all members of the group (Corbin, 1986). Nevertheless, listening to them again helped me clarify some issues during data analysis.

In the earlier stages of my analysis, I began by organising the first two diaries into three categories of delegation, consensus and legitimacy. I read every diary and categorise it according to events and make sub-categories for each category (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). However, I was not convinced that this would be the way of achieving a grounded analysis and decided to review

them again. After which, I began to recognise and identify the categories within my diaries before deciding to break down the categories further (Wolcott, 1994). I analysed by progressively reviewing my diaries from Sydney meeting and categorised events in order to conclude at the end with ten main events that constitute the core of my analysis (Wolcott, 1994). At that time, it was evident that decisions or circumstances that played a role in shaping the work and the outcome of the working group as a whole related to my research key points: legitimacy, delegation and consensus. After giving a title to the event I copied extracts of the diaries as quotes and put them in a separate file where I gather comments about events (Wolcott, 1994). Comments are also for further investigation and development.

The diaries are broken up according to the categories that I chose. I use quotes in all relevant locations when the many of the categories appear to be overlapping (Alaszewski, 2006). When all the three categories had been set, I gathered the same category from the different diaries in one document and prioritised them according to my research questions and propositions (Wolcott, 1994). There was a difficulty of keeping the context while gathering the same categories within the same diary; however it was still possible to go back to the original context in case of doubt. The sub categories recognised initially and ultimately may have been influenced by the stage in which research would have reached. Therefore, there may be presence of some topics in diaries which do not appear in other diaries. For example, during the early stage of research, I focused on institutionalisation and discourse, is the reason why this aspect appears in the early diaries and is not quite present in the latter diaries.

I analysed and subdivided the phenomena and concepts according to the categories identified as relevant to the situations (May, 1986). My experience showed that some decisions or declarations or positions could be explained either in front or in subsequent events. I used them when reviewing a certain diary while thinking about related events which happened in former or subsequent meetings to explain a specific event in that diary (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). I moved from a diary to another looking for the related information.

I used quotes in every category and numbered all the sub-categories that I identified, followed by their titles. I then gathered the titles of similar sub-categories together (Alaszewski, 2006). This explains why some sub-categories are not well distributed; signalling that they are less significant. Therefore, the sub-categories identified through their frequencies within the category

are distributed accordingly, in the same category and are also sourced from the other diaries. When I singled out and identified all of the sub-categories, I found that I may have given different titles for similar sub-categories. Therefore, while gathering them, I automatically gathered together similar sub-categories even if their titles are not ostensibly the same to the external reader (Alaszewski, 2006). By this stage of my research, I undeniably had to some extent influenced the way that I distinguished the sub-categories initially and subsequently (Wolcott, 1994).

After having created and established the initial categories for Sydney, Vienna, Paris, and Cape Town diaries, I found that Sydney diary did not contain enough data for consideration. This led me to focus on categories arising from four other meetings: Vienna, Paris, Cape Town and Bahrain. Sydney diary was excluded and Bahrain diary was added instead. The choice of the four diaries is explained by their richness in data related to the research concepts and their representation of different crucial stages of the ISO 26000 WGSR.

There were two main options in analysing the three main categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990):

- Starting with the most frequent sub-categories of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups and compare them in the four shortlisted diaries. In this case some sub-categories which are not common with all other meetings may be difficult to compare. Therefore one way of achieving it was by writing about every category and extracting the trends within that category.
- To read through the sub-categories in every meeting and then compare the ideas and trends towards the end of the process of analysis.

The first option was chosen partly because I was interested in some of the commonplace and everyday ways that consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups are achieved within the ISO 26000 WGSR. Subsequent to this, I began analysing the more common sub-categories first. However, the shortcomings of such a style of analysis are obvious in that it resembles a statistical method which views the frequencies, when qualitative methodology is meant to analyse cases and represent them as a whole (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Having been aware of this limitation, I try to highlight the constraints of my chosen method throughout my analysis.

No software is used to encode my data as I considered the diaries had direct exploitation in understanding the meaning and context of events (Wolcott, 1994). Manual data coding and analysis is more suitable for this reason as it only requires arranging the different diaries

according to emerging themes (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). They are organised according to the frequency and their relevant themes, excluding minor relevance themes. Similar categories are drawn together from all of the diaries. I then developed a researcher-originated text inspired by and reflecting on those categories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). It is obvious that manual coding takes longer than using software. Nevertheless, manual coding seems to be more pertinent for data I collected as field-notes.

Analysing the data manually allowed me to categorise them according to the events as they happened and to their background and not only as reference to some keywords generated by the software (Wolcott, 2001). I wrote and commented on those diaries which explain exactly what the debate refers to at a certain point in time. Due to the manual method, it is possible that some code titles were mentioned more often in a specific section of the data but not in other places. Similar sub-categories were put together despite not having the same titles. Every category with quotes is numbered according to all the sub-categories and their titles as identified (Alaszewski, 2006).

Wolcott (1994: 13) rejects the existence of 'pure' description. It is true that the observer will overlook some issues and highlight others. Data therefore reflects a subjective description of the observer as I needed to identify that at some stages (Wolcott, 1994). Some data have to be avoided as they were related to my behaviour to avoid bias, faults, etc., in the process. I also filtered the data (Wolcott, 1994: 13) through my own perception especially as I was fully involved in the process and possibly had developed sympathies for some and antipathies for other members, countries, groups, organisations or stakeholders.

In my early stages of data collection, I found it to be challenging to decide which data to be collected and which to be excluded (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This was even more complex while changing theoretical and disciplinary focus. This uncertainty led me to collect all kinds of data for fear of losing any (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In actual fact, moving from raw data to a working draft is rather tricky as it is likely that data is filtered through inner preferences and to keep only that is relevant to the study (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). It is also likely that due to the lack of training or exposure on grounded theory that led to collecting all sorts of data as it is a rather new subject to me (Chenitz and Swanson, 1986).

Indeed, it was only through time that I understood some of the basic rules related to collecting data through participant observation. Even then, the amount of data collected needed not to be limited as irrelevant ones are far likely to be collected for fear that they could be important at some point of discussions (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This however, depends on the type of personality as well; as I tend to collect a lot of data before reducing it in later stages (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Definitely, the amount of data I came across at when I started data analysis had certain influence on the interpretations I came with; there will be either lack of relatively supportive data for the points made or more than required supportive data according to situations (Wolcott, 1994: 15).

4.4.2.2 Analysing Discourse in Diaries

Texts and other forms of discourse reflected in the dynamics of the process were analysed from my collection of diaries. Discourse refers to practices of writing and talking (Woodilla, 1998). Parker (1992: 5) defines discourse as ‘a system of statements which constructs an object’. Fairclough (1989: 24) uses the word ‘discourse’ to refer to the ‘whole process of social interaction’. Van Dijk (1997: 6) acknowledged three main dimensions of discourse including ‘language use, the communication of beliefs and interaction in social situations’ (Van Dijk, 1997: 2). However, the visual aspect of discourse has been often ignored in discourse studies. This could be due to the bias of traditional linguistics for spoken language (Van Dijk, 1997: 6). Actually, non-verbal activity also ‘plays an important role in the interpretation of the meanings and functions of discourse in face-to-face interaction’ (Van Dijk, 1997: 6).

Text is not understood to be just written transcriptions but any kind of symbolic expression requiring a physical medium (Taylor and Van Every, 1993: 109). Talk is therefore considered as text (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 1997). Text may take different forms, including ‘written documents, verbal reports, artwork, spoken words, pictures, symbols, buildings, and other artefacts’ (Fairclough, 1995). Discourse analysis has proven to be a useful theoretical framework for understanding the social production of organisational and inter-organisational phenomena (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000; Putnam and Fairhurst, 2001). Therefore, discourse is not analysed as such but through text constituting it (Fairclough, 1992; Parker, 1992).

Discourse analysis involves ‘analysis of collections of texts, the ways they are made meaningful through their links to other texts, the ways in which they draw on different discourses, how and to whom they are disseminated, the methods of their production, and the manner in which they are received and consumed’ (Fairclough, 1992; Van Dijk, 1997). According to Dachler and Hosking (1995), meaning is produced through ‘multiloguing’ which is an ‘actively relational process of creating common understandings on the basis of language’. Others also consider networking as a ‘conversational process of meaning making’. In fact, ‘discourse is both socially constituted and socially constitutive as it produces objects of knowledge, social identities and relationships between people’ (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997).

Organisations are ‘created and sustained as managers engage their surroundings through the use of linguistic codes and conventions that define appropriate patterns of social activity’ (Fiol, 1989). In this sense, leadership becomes a ‘language game’ (Pondy, 1976). The linguistic images used in such communication produce ‘order, coherence, and a sense of corporate identity, because of their inherent ambiguity and their ability to convey different meanings for different people’ (Alvesson, 1990). Thus, the ‘basic evolutionary process assumed by sensemaking is one in which retrospective interpretations are built on during interdependent interaction’ (Weick et al., 2005).

4.5 Grounding the Theory

Once the researcher is satisfied that the amount of data and the resulting categories are saturated, then it is time to start with writing up the theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). At all times, it may be felt that the major difficulty with the grounded theory approach is the need for constant interaction with the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This same challenge could also be considered as its major strength. The researcher continuously reviews his/her data in order to explore the emerging theory until he/she becomes familiar with them; only then can it be considered to become a reflection of reality (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Saturation could be reached in a shorter period by using a process of maximisation and minimisation of differences (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This involves collecting additional data from similar sources in order to verify both the existence of the category and its propositions while the category is emerging (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Later, when other data start to fit the

category, the researcher starts collecting data from different sources. This way, properties of the category could be developed and integrated with existing categories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). A problem which may arise from this constant collection and interaction with the data is deciding which data are relevant and which are not. This dilemma may be overcome to some extent by the provision of regular breaks from data collection, during which time the researcher can analyse and review the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). I did not have this problem since contexts of my data collection were separated enough in time.

4.6. Methodological Challenges

The most challenging issues I have faced with this thesis are related to the difficulty collecting and analysing data and grounding theory about relational perspectives of leadership. There are also challenges related to the study of relational phenomena in general. There is another challenge related to the objectivity of qualitative research.

4.6.1 Methodological Challenges of Relational Research

Relational approaches allow researchers to study observed systems as well as the observing system (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). Actually, the research process could be conducted in a smoother way by becoming ‘part of the system’ (Keller, 1985). In this way, a relational approach integrates the observer into ‘the process of knowing’ (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000) and on ‘understanding the extensive interdependencies within and between organisations and the environments in which they are embedded’ (Dyer and Singh, 1998). Truly, ‘it is through interconnectedness that knowledge is generated’ (Lichtenstein, 2000).

Hedstrom and Swedberg (1998: 21) contended that studying changes in macro levels of analysis requires looking at how those macro properties impact individual behaviours and vice versa. It simply means observing participants’ behaviour individually in the working group in addition to dynamics of processes. However, reporting about relational research is not an easy task, as the style used should not give an impression of certainty about research’s results (Van Maanen, 1995). A writing style open for feedback and dialogue (Van Maanen, 1995) would enhance ‘communication, creativity, and validity in science in the long term’ (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000).

4.6.2 Limits of Naturalistic Interpretations

Argyris (1969) noted that adopting only naturalistic and descriptive research on behaviour within organisations could lead to the assumption that what presently exists could be considered as inevitable. There is always a risk of coming out with biased results in cases where only the prevailing human conditions in organisations were studied (Argyris, 1990). Limited practice in realities other than the descriptive observed behaviour of individuals may even lead researchers to believe that biased behaviours are natural (Argyris, 1969). For example, ‘acceptance of the ‘leader myth’ promotes alienation, deskilling, reification of organisational forms, and dysfunctional organisational structures’ (Gemmill and Oakley, 1992: 273). In this sense, Mitroff described positivist research as an interpretive activity that produces a myth of objectivity (Mitroff, 1972). Astley and Zammuto (1992: 447) also stressed that ‘the positivist methodologies that predominate within organisation science yield fundamentally distorted pictures of ‘objective’ reality’. Although objective reality may exist independently of minds, our knowledge of that reality is subjectively constructed (Kuhn, 1970). He argued that prevailing views of the truth reflect accepted ways of looking at the world embodied in dominant theoretical perspectives (Kuhn, 1970). In this regard, ‘paradigmatic language is crucial in shaping interpretive frames of reference’ (Astley and Zammuto, 1992).

The most significant limitation of grounded theory methodology is that it is usually considered as only a precursor for other theory-driven research (Chenitz and Swanson, 1986). Limitations to participant observation could also include the length of time required to collect enough data (Dobbert, 1982). The time to be consumed may not be available for a PhD study. Cost of participant observation could also be high if the setting moves in different parts of the world. For example, in my current study I had to attend more than 12 formal and informal meetings and seminars in the five continents. That definitely cost a substantial amount of money. I covered expenses through funding of the Robert Gordon University, the ISO DEVCO and personal savings. I would not have been able to attend most of the meetings without funding from the ISO DEVCO and RGU.

Another challenge in participant observation is the relatively big quantity of data collected. For an inexperienced ethnographer, it is likely that far more than required data would be collected. The problem would appear during the data analysis which is time-consuming and indeed, it is a

demanding task to convert a big amount of data into theory (Bettis and Prahalad, 1995). There is also the risk that data collected may document the obvious and yet miss the truly significant (Minnis, 1985).

It is obvious that qualitative research has some aspects of subjectivity (Astley and Zammuto, 1992) which affects its validity and generalizability. Therefore, subjective choices and orientations should be expected to float in the methodology and in the interpretation of data. It is unavoidable that ethnographers will bring their values and cultural understanding and therefore their linguistic background into a social setting (Astley and Zammuto, 1992). Nevertheless, qualitative methodologies still help researchers uncover some of the hidden and impalpable phenomena which would not be discovered or studied through variable-based approaches (Astley and Zammuto, 1992). McCloskey noted that even mathematical and statistical protocols are 'rhetorical' devices for persuading scientific audiences to adopt a subjective worldview (McCloskey, 1985). Grounded theory also depends largely on the personality of the researcher and what he/she can bring to the study (Minnis, 1985).

Memory can also be referred to as a source of instruction of diaries and participant observation field notes. It is obvious that human memory cannot keep all information across which it comes or simply ignores some information. Nevertheless, it can keep what it considers as relevant according to the hidden and known agenda of the person. During analysis of diaries, I discovered that too much information related to events and people and situations were being kept in mind. This may be explained by my involvement with the group as a participant and being ideologically positioned in the process. Obviously, linking events and data from a spectrum of two years and a half and wide spectrum of meetings and places was not difficult. Presumably, I may have been biased in the type of data I presented or events I recalled, but I have been trying as much as possible to objectively translate the reality and distinguish between my status as participant and researcher. Therefore, the memory loss issues which face fieldworkers are reduced when the fieldworker is a complete participant.

4.7 Ethical Issues

My participant observation within the meetings of the ISO 26000 WGSR raises many ethical issues. First of all, I had been a participant in the process. As an SSRO research representative of

Morocco, I was able to attend all meetings of the working group and IDTF and other related stakeholder, language and other sub-groups without any restrictions since January 2007. In addition, I received all emails destined to the general members or to members of the sub-groups I belonged to. Among the issues that have created special challenges for my role as participant-observer was the variety of settings, from close interpersonal interactions to observation of public meetings and actual participation in social events. The context of cultural differences was also important. I had been especially sensitive to differences of age, gender, class, health, and culture that may raise ethical issues during the course of my Participant Observation (Smith and Kornblum, 1996).

Most of members of the ISO 26000 WGSR I worked with have known that I am conducting research on the dynamics in the process. In addition, most of IDTF members know that I am a researcher on the dynamics of the process. I told them about it in public in more than one IDTF meeting in addition to private discussions with IDTF members. I was also invited to present about my PhD research in a Professional workshop at the Academy of Management conference in Montreal in 2010 and in a seminar on the ISO 26000 and social dialogue at the University of Quebec in Montreal in January 2011. In overall, I have tried my best to say clearly what my study was about. Moreover, I did explain my research aims and purposes in more detail within the Moroccan mirror committee and IDTF and they appreciated the information.

In terms of informant confidentiality, I had been trying to further explain my knowledge to actors in the interaction (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). As for informed consent, I had been trying as much as possible to obtain it whenever it is feasible. However, I consider that it was too difficult to receive formal informed consent from every participant in the ISO26000 WGSR meetings made up of a community of more than 400 participants. Furthermore, it was decided in the Vienna meeting that doctoral researchers already investigating part of the ISO 26000 WGSR process did not need any further authorisation before conducting their research. Even so, I informally tried to continuously clarify my purpose, research topic, and data gathering methods (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Certain members of the group have been aware that I was researching about the ISO 26000 process. Actually, I had been explaining the bulk of my research to members who asked me. Most of the members who went into details with me come from academia. For example, during

the meeting of IDTF in Potsdam, Germany I had the opportunity to talk about my research to many members. I found keen interest from most of the group members. In addition, many of them offered their support. Some others expressed a wish to read my thesis after it was completed.

Using pictures taken from the setting helps showing the case for some elements of theory development. However, the pictures I took are supposed to be for personal use. Therefore, I did not get formal consent about the pictures from all members appearing in them. Nevertheless, as all actors in the interaction are public personalities and as the process has been open, it is possible to find all types of pictures of the setting in Internet. In all cases, I submitted pictures as part of an appendix for examination only and I am not publishing them in the final thesis. I also recorded six teleconferences of IDTF without disclosing that to the participants. I did not ask for retrospective consent since I did not directly use them in data analysis.

In summary, I did my best to observe a certain minimum of ethical behaviour as related to actors in the interaction. I strictly observed ethical standards which need to govern the relationship between the ethnographer and actors in the interaction such as confidentiality, honesty about risks, benefits, and intent, and responsibility to minimize any risk (Dobbert, 1982). I also feel responsibility for protecting the privacy of actors in the interaction and the groups' interests. I replaced the real names of actors in the interaction with pseudonyms and attempted to make the names of organisations and groups as anonymous as possible (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

It should also be noted that I have been taking some stands which are favourable/non favourable to certain groups and people. Therefore, I assume that some of my interpretations may be influenced by the politics and power relations and also personal relations with members of the groups. I may also have avoided commenting on my own or others' behaviour. I may also have emphasised the extent of the role of some members and ignored others. Furthermore, I may have given less importance to some observations which may have been crucial to this research.

4.8 Summary of Chapter

I adopted grounded theory to study relational leadership within a global multistakeholder group. I adopted participant observation as a data collection strategy. I followed the protocols of grounded theory and participant observation as set in the writings of Glaser and Strauss,

Spradley and Wolcott and others. Grounded theory is based on theoretical sampling and continual comparative analysis. It is a process based on inducing theory from data collected in the field. It is not based on a set of pre-defined research questions but on a continuous redesign of the research questions and research focus according to developments in the field. The current study showed that there are challenges related to research design, data collection and analysis for relational research oriented perspectives.

I was a complete participant in the research setting combining active participation and data collection. I collected data via diaries which I reviewed and organised through time. My field notes included description of events, interactions in the setting, discourse, email exchange and document content from the process. I used four diaries relating four ISO 26000 WGSR and IDTF meetings for data collection purposes. Data is collected until saturation is reached. Data analysis is based on interpretation of the contents of diaries involving categorisation, re-conceptualisation of ideas and themes, and quotes from diaries in addition to my own interpretations of significance and meaning. Good relationships with informants or actors in the interaction are crucial for the success of the participant observation experience. Securing access to the research setting is not enough. The researcher has to overcome several challenges to maintain access up until the end of the research experience.

I used diaries to collect data. My diaries were chronologically organised and included entries on events and behaviours, and body language in addition to my interpretation. I started analysing data from the start of data collection, iterating on revisions and reinterpretations numerous times before conducting a final analysis once saturation was reached. Data analysis was carried by citing quotes from diaries, analysing, discussing them with my supervisor and commenting on them. I encoded my data manually and did not use any software for that purpose. The analysis of diaries came out with three main categories; consensus, legitimacy and delegation to groups. Every category is split into several sub-categories. The analysis of the three main categories and other sub-categories, adopted here as acts of organising, served to build up a theory of relational leadership.

Participant observation as a data collection strategy raises several methodological challenges such as the huge amount of data collected. Although I did not have major problems accessing the research setting, my access had been jeopardised because of factors related to my status as a

participant, funding and entry visas, among others. Participant observation has been qualified as effective in uncovering acts that generate social structures. It allows the researcher to understand interactions as they happen in the setting. It is a fact that participant observers relate to reality from their perspective and their accounts are necessarily influenced by their own specific, historically situated symbolic and cultural capital.

Limits to participant observation as a methodology for research investigation include among others the researcher taking some standpoints and adopting particular behaviours to maintain participation which could have an impact on the degree of research rigour. There is also the risk of over-identification of the researcher with actors in the interaction. Even so, it is acceptable that the research outcomes of my work reflect my personal self, actors in the interaction, the research field and inevitably my own cultural background. Those challenges can be overcome through creative use of data and theory triangulation as well as articulation of reflexive research accounts. My participation also raised some ethical challenges which have been identified and discussed.

**CHAPTERS 5, 6, 7 AND 8 HAVE BEEN RESTRICTED
FOR CONFIDENTIALITY REASONS.**

Chapter 9: Relational Leadership Theory in a Global Multistakeholder Group

9.1 Introduction to Chapter

This chapter is a discussion of the findings from the empirical study in the light of the literature review and the theoretical framework. Theory developed in this chapter is grounded in data. The chapter presents the main findings from the study and develops a theory of relational leadership in global multistakeholder groups. The chapter starts by summarising the main findings on consensus-building in the ISO 26000 WGSR. Emerging values have been found to play a significant role in the success or failure of consensus-building in a global multistakeholder group. Emotions and ambiguity have also been found to have an impact on consensus-building processes and social order in general. The findings on legitimacy highlighted the role of norms and stakeholders as factors contributing to legitimacy in a global multistakeholder group. Legitimacy as a relational concept in this study is presented as a validation of individuals, groups, processes and relationships. The outcome is a sort of social order involving leadership relationships according to the order of the time.

This chapter also presents a theory of delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group. The extent of the mandate of a delegated group is found to be of crucial importance to the success or failure in a global multistakeholder group. Stakeholder balance is also found to be more significant on outcome than job congruence. The theory of relational leadership in a global multistakeholder group is offered as the combination of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder setting. Bourdieu's theory of relational sociology and mainly his concepts of habitus, capital and field, in addition to the theory of practice, are used as a framework to explain how the three acts of organising contribute to relational leadership. Relational leadership is presented as a social construction of actors in the interaction. This chapter also gives a summary of the limits of entity perspectives to leadership. The chapter is concluded with the model of relational leadership in a global multistakeholder group.

The second section will be allocated to consensus-building in a global multistakeholder group. It attempts to give some of the main characteristics of building consensus in a global multistakeholder group and its relationship with leadership as organising. The third section

develops an application of legitimacy as an organising act of leadership. It is understood as a process where acts, processes and entities are validated against norms. The fourth section proposes a theory of delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group. This is considered a major contribution since no research on delegation to groups by other groups could be found. Delegation to groups is found to contribute to leadership relational processes by being a means for consensus-building and a mechanism of legitimation. The last section presents a model of relational leadership in a global multistakeholder group. Relational leadership is found to include organising consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups.

9.2 Consensus-building in a Global Multistakeholder Group

9.2.1 Consensus-building and Social Order

A stable social order rests on voluntary consent or consensus (Rousseau, 1948). Leadership is a social influence process through which social order is constructed (Uhl Bien, 2006). Consensus contributes to the social construction of leadership in a specific context. Moreover, social order in multistakeholder groups, more so than many other settings, requires voluntary consent or consensus. Therefore, consensus is among the significant determinants of leadership relational processes in a global multistakeholder group. Furthermore, legitimacy is based on either consensus or the public interest or both (Zelditch, 2001: 41). Based on all these relationships, we may conclude that legitimacy is among the main determinants of relational processes of leadership and is particularly salient in a global multistakeholder group. These assumptions have been confirmed by the grounded theory developed from the four year study conducted within the ISO 26000 WGSR.

The study within the ISO 26000 WGSR has shown that acceptance of a social order is not always voluntary (Parsons, 1960). Social order is reached whenever consensus has been obtained among most parties forming part of the group. It is obvious that not all parties agree all the time. Therefore, some groups or individuals may be constrained to follow the consensus of the majority when they see no other way out. Some individuals or groups may fear social or group reprisals or rejection which makes them accept consensus.

The stability of the social order within global multistakeholder groups, as in any other democratic setting is attributed to legitimacy (Lipset, 1959). As far as the consensus reached is

widely legitimised, the social order is likely to be maintained. The legitimacy of the social order is related to the leadership processes involved. Actors involved use legitimacy to reach consensus. The more legitimate the individuals and groups involved in leadership processes, the more legitimate is the consensus and thus the social order reached. Consensus is supposed to be the legitimate way of reaching social order in a global multistakeholder group. Therefore, though the overall goal may be shared, members seek the achievement of consensus after gaining the agreement of the majority and rejecting individual group interests as a basis for legitimising the social order.

9.2.2 Norms and Values

It has also been made clear that norms and values play an important role in reaching consensus and thus social order (Parsons, 1960). Consensus is generally reached through following some prescribed norms and values which enlighten the way for attaining that purpose. However, in a global multistakeholder group, norms and values might change according to the situation and to the needs of consensus. Some circumstances require a complete reorganisation of norms to allow consensus to be reached. Those situations engender leadership relationship processes. The combination of circumstances and people allows the emergence of leadership relationships enhancing consensus even in cases which do not respect due norms and values. Moreover, leadership processes are related to circumstances as are consensus processes. Consensus is at certain times reached according to the norms and values of the time. Therefore new norms and values may arise which not those are already prescribed by custom and practice.

In global multistakeholder groups, it is not necessary that individuals and groups involved in the consensus-building process share the same norms, values and beliefs. It is obvious that Parsons (1960) built his theory in a political system for identifying the prerequisites of democracy. However, outside the political system the relationships between actors involved may be other than rulers and ruled or superiors and subordinates as in societies or hierarchical organisations. Relationships in global multistakeholder groups, for example, are most of the time those of peers except for some specific cultures. In fact, some cultures require the maintenance of a clear hierarchy in relationships even in the case of multistakeholder groups. Therefore, members of a specific country delegation, even though they represent a specific stakeholder group, will need to strictly observe the position of their official delegation. In a global multistakeholder group,

values and beliefs and interests and even goals are different but still the group may reach consensus according to norms constructed during the process. Leadership emerges when individuals and groups holding different values and norms and interests work together to reach a certain social order.

Norms and values may be formerly prescribed by the management of the organisation or the setting. However, there are norms and values which are created on the spot. Norms and values for a multistakeholder group are based on consensus. Legitimacy is then defined according to the degree of consensus reached. In other circumstances, group interest makes norms and values legitimate (Rousseau, 1948). In those cases group interest, which is in reality often defined by an elite set of individuals or groups, is advanced as being a legitimate reason for reaching social order. Having group interest as a basis for social order normally requires that group members share norms, values and beliefs. In some special circumstances, such as in global multistakeholder groups where group members do not necessarily share the same values and beliefs, group interest may be imposed as a basis for reaching consensus or social order. It still can be defined as a consensus, but not necessarily one with the agreement of most of the parties involved. The elite articulate what constitutes the group's interest and attempt to persuade the other group members that what they propose is the only way forward for reaching an acceptable social order. There are leadership relational processes in this situation between the elite supporting the social order and the rest of the group. Whether it is based on consensus or group interest, any social order is required to be legitimate to remain stable (Parsons, 1960). Leadership relational processes play a cutting edge role in reaching social consensus and order and in legitimising or delegitimising the social order reached.

9.2.2.1 Norms and Consensus-building

This study has highlighted a number of issues related to norms in consensus. Repeated interactions play an important role in the development of norms (Sherif, 1936). Over time, some issues which get repeatedly dealt with the same way are institutionalised as de facto norms. A global multistakeholder group developing a standard over a certain number of years is likely to generate some stable norms as a result of the recurrence of situations (Festinger, 1957). Those norms are either expressly or tacitly approved by some or all members of the group (Thibaut and Kelley, 1959).

Norms help to enforce the compromise reached within a global multistakeholder group. Agreement may have to occur although numerous attempts to review the consensus reached. The reasons involved may range from change of circumstances to the non-legitimacy of the compromise reached. Leaders in addition to influential members of the group usually set the rules for consensus-building. Among those rules is the non-revision of decisions that have already been taken. In general, compromises reached are respected except in very particular circumstances. The rules are generally prompted according to situations to prevent others from trying to re-open closed debates.

9.2.2.2 Enforcement of Norms and Consensus

Enforcement mechanisms of compromises reached in global multistakeholder groups constitute a prerequisite for successful consensus-building. Successful attempts to review a consensus presumably depend on the weight of the stakeholder group, country or the level of influence of the member in the group. Evidently the influence of members plays a vital role in rejecting attempts to re-open and review the resolved compromise. The process of rejection of revisiting previous compromises involves firm statements emanating from influential members who refuse to re-review the compromises, usually serving to end attempts made by other members to re-initiate the debate. Mutual interactions of group members therefore orient public opinion within the group (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944). It is obvious that the interaction entails the formation and disbandment of leadership relational processes.

In a global multistakeholder group legitimacy of any consensus obtained largely depends on the stakeholders' power balance within the group that previously reached the consensus. Stakeholder balance is therefore one of the criteria for accepting or rejecting a revision to a compromise that was reached. This means that the leader of the group is referred to as someone who is expected to prescribe and articulate the rules for renegotiating a consensus. Consensus reached in a teleconference may also be enforced on the group when the stakeholder balance rule has been observed. Effectively, it therefore has the same value as a consensus reached within a face-to-face meeting. Some practices which are not stated as rules are also considered as tacit compromises. Those practices that are developed within the group and are then perceived to be institutionalized can be difficult to review due to their nature.

9.2.2.3 Norms and Time Constraints

Time has often been used to urge participants to stop or limit debate or to postpone reaching a decision on issues or creating pressure for reaching an agreement. Time constraints are constantly used as a justification to delegate work to individuals or groups especially when consensus is not reached. Without doubt, time constraints limit the consultation span within a group. This context pushes the group to decide on the spot instead of having time for broader consultation. Time constraints, on one hand are used as a catalyst for stakeholders to agree with the hope that they will be able to reach stronger agreements in the future. It is often used to delay the process of decision-making on some issues. Evidently, participants are prevented from debating them further in order to move on with other issues.

The leader of the group is often the one who focuses on time constraints to urge members to proceed swiftly. The leader reminds members about the time so that they all take the matter of time into consideration. Participants are repeatedly reminded that they should shorten the length of their discussions in the future. Time constraints in a multistakeholder setting lead multistakeholder groups to prioritise and avoid or ignore dealing with the less important issues. However, such issues may not be the least important throughout the process or in perpetuity. Clearly, experience and expertise play a huge role in creating the difference between the most and least important issues. As a matter of fact, experience and expertise are used to justify the legitimacy of the decisions taken.

9.2.3 Ambiguity and Uncertainty in Consensus-building

Uncertainty highlights the difference between the information an organisation has and the information it needs (Galbraith, 1973). Ambiguity is defined as a lack of clarity regarding the relevant variables and their functional relationships (Kenneth and Meyerson, 1988: 112). Ambiguity is therefore about the unknown determinants of an environment where two or more actors interact with each other. A global multistakeholder group building consensus on a standard is likely to be a field for spreading ambiguity (Kenneth and Meyerson, 1988: 112). The lack of information and the unpredictability of actors in such a setting contribute further to ambiguity and uncertainty in a global multistakeholder group (Duncan, 1972). Members while

building consensus therefore attempt to reduce the amount of uncertainty and ambiguity in the field (Sutherland, 1977).

Ambiguity helps some leaders strategise their interactions so as to achieve gains while not discussing some or all issues in depth. In some situations where no real consensus is reached, ambiguity may help to sustain an artificial consensus. Some or all parties may accept the ambiguity in so far as they are not ready for agreeing to a consensus. In addition, they could delay situations of ambiguity also to show their disapproval of the understanding and structure of the consensus-building process (Schrader et al., 1993). Actually, some situations may highlight the coexistence of dissensus and consensus at the same time (Kenneth and Meyerson, 1988). Leadership processes play an important role in setting the balance between dissensus and consensus. Ambiguity is therefore strategically used by some members as a method for progressing issues that are favourable to their views and interests. On the one hand, they clear up ambiguities that appear in some areas and on the other hand, ambiguity is deliberately sustained as a method of prolonging discussion on some other issues.

In a global multistakeholder setting, ambiguity is an unmistakably recurring issue. It is sometimes unintentional and often happens during communication among members. However, it can also be intentional by members keeping some issues ambiguous until they are manoeuvred at some later stage. Indeed, ambiguity could be considered as a 'relief space' for some members and groups during consensus-building. Clearly ambiguity is often expressed through discourse. The discourse in the interaction helps structure the uncertainty and ambiguity in the field into a palpable course of action (Kenneth and Meyerson, 1988). Participants in the decision-making process build mental models that help them dissipate ambiguity and uncertainty (Schrader et al., 1993). Actors in the interaction also build up mental models for leadership influence resulting from the ambiguity and uncertainty present in situations. They also build up mental models of a social order resulting from the shift in leadership relationships (Mintzberg 1976: 54).

9.2.4 Consensus-building: Process and Content

Consensus in a global multistakeholder group does not necessarily constitute an agreement between all participants (Auvine et al., 1978: xii). There can still be a consensus even when the outcome is not accepted or preferred by all participants (Gray, 1989: 25). The current study has

shown that both process and outcome need to be agreed upon to reach consensus in a multistakeholder group. It is important that group members feel that they have had some influence on the final decision even when they do not completely agree with it (Bradford, 1976). This is because different individuals and group members have different agendas and therefore not necessarily all of them will have expected or desired the specific outcome. It may achieve more than expected for some and less than expected for others. Consensus is more about the interaction processes which happen and the cognitions participants or observers make of it than it is about different positions of individuals and groups. It is a combination of the situation, the interaction and the cognition (Schuman, 2005: 2).

Ground rules are used at the beginning of meetings of global multistakeholder groups to make things clear for all. Those rules serve to define the accepted and unaccepted behaviours during consensus-building. Generally, participants will be asked to approve those rules before the start of their work. Those 'ground rules represent the group's consensus on consensus' (Schuman, 2005: 2). Ground rules are a reflection of the interaction between leadership and consensus processes. Both are relational processes involving influence and cognition about that influence.

Questions generally raised by group members vary according to the circumstances. The first category of questions is related to a demand for finding a solution to an issue. The response may be specific or general depending on the complexity of the issue and the enthusiasm of the respondent. Sometimes, the question of process is raised solely to express the level of confusion that the group finds itself in. However, some questions posed could be meant to seek and encourage general suggestions from respondents. Some of the questions are of a set form and composed of two tiers; a tier proposing a mid-way for consensus and another tier requesting confirmation of a compromise based on the mid-way consensus point.

9.2.5 Consensus-building and Coercion

It is possible for there to be some degree of coercion in specific consensus-building processes. This coercion is generally applied to some individuals or groups who resist the accomplishment of consensus. Most coercion is generally self-inflicted in the case of self-control and fear of social rejection. It is also inflicted by the group under the form of psychological pressure and sometimes aggressive language and bullying. The nature of this game with language is typically

articulated by people with long experience in negotiation settings. The current study showed also that when a member in a meeting is verbally bullied regularly by some members; he/she is also likely to be bullied by other members outside that circle as well. Thus this makes sure that he/she becomes vulnerable and is then seen by others as an easy target. In some situations, threats to the individuals or groups with the possibility of losing privileges or even rights within the group could be used as coercion for consensus-building purposes.

Elsewhere, Markell (1997: 391) considered that an action aimed at disagreement was illegitimate. However, the current study in a global multistakeholder group shows that there are many actions which are conducted in order to abandon consensus. Given that interests and goals are likely to be different in a multistakeholder group, it is obvious that some individuals and groups will attempt to sabotage the process at some stage. Groups may promote disagreement at some stage as a way of gaining strategic gains in consensus, although they might later adjust their behaviour if the circumstances change into their favour. The current study has found two significant means of coercion in consensus in a global multistakeholder group: threats and warnings.

9.2.6 Threats and Warnings

The intensity of the threat or the warning would depend on the degree of conflict involved or consensus anticipated. A threat can also be perceived by different cultures in the form of a change to the social order. It is considered as a source of confusion by some but as evidence of progress by others. The warnings may also involve time as a form of justification. The reasons given could be the limited available time and the need to reach objectives. Further, some warnings are intended to persuade some participants from even thinking of taking a specific direction as they know other members may object to it. In fact, some of the conditions imposed in global multistakeholder groups seem as though they are deliberately meant to prevent participants from being overly presumptuous with their views and ideas. Similarly, a warning can be used as a deliberate means of attracting attention to an important issue. In global multistakeholder groups, the threat or warning of one party in the negotiation may be proclaimed just as a tactic to observe the response of other individuals or groups in the group. Some threats deliberately make big demands while only expecting to obtain a small percentage of what is to be claimed along the way.

In a sensitive global multistakeholder group, unilateral decisions or actions can jeopardise the survival of the whole group. Moreover, failing to consult the entire set of stakeholders on an issue which is considered as crucial or is not sufficiently debated, may result immediately or later in a crisis within the group. This type of threat proves that a small slip-up in the decision-making or consensus process in a global multistakeholder group can seriously jeopardise the existence and continuation of the group. In a significant scenario, warnings and threats can be issued in the form of an ultimatum. In an extreme case the threat may be to withdraw from the entire decision-making process. Undeniably, the withdrawal of one stakeholder group can delegitimise the whole process. In this case, the influential leaders of the group would make sense of the seriousness of the threat and are likely to respond appropriately. If the leader however considers the threat as not being serious enough to damage the social order, the threat could simply be ignored without harm to the consensus-building process.

9.2.7 Language and Cultural Issues in Consensus-building

Language plays an important role in consensus-building within global multistakeholder settings. People from different countries speak different languages and communicate in a single language which is English. The language could be a potential barrier for some individuals and groups and a tool of empowerment for others. As Yoshihara et al. (2001) contended, language barriers lead to delays in decision-making and misunderstandings. Furthermore, language barriers create a power shift among participants. Native English speakers and other participants with good English language skills become privileged over the rest of participants. English is used as an instrument to strengthen the positions of some and weaken the positions of others. English therefore contributes to shifts in leadership relationships in this kind of setting.

Language similarities do not imply similar communication preferences (Zander, 2005). It is not unusual to witness obvious differences between communication styles of members from countries such as The United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada. Language has also served as a tool for exclusion of certain individuals and groups. Native English speakers generally think that only members with good English language skills can make part of drafting group (Welch et al., 2005: 17). Consequently, it is not uncommon for some language skilled people, even when they might not be as competent as others in the actual content, to control the communication involved in the majority of situations (Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999).

Building trust within a multilingual team of different stakeholders takes time and requires high frequency of social interaction and consequent socialization. In larger teams that meet only sporadically, the barrier of language is not easily overcome. In smaller teams, high meeting frequency and socialisation in addition to the length in which team members work together and language skills of participants impact on the extent to which the language barrier is overcome. However, mutual perceptions and stereotypes and fear of the other remain barriers for more relationship strengths within those teams. In addition, native language speakers always define the accepted level of working language; English mostly, and in general they seek to use it to serve their interests. Particularly in drafting text, language skills can be used as a way of including or excluding members.

Irony frequently appears and especially during times of tension within global multistakeholder groups. The most common application of irony is by using expressions which are generally used in a popular language or in some specific fields. Disagreement on some issues may aggravate some members to utter unusually strong words. The dilemma is customarily expressed through direct speech where irony builds an analogy or metaphor of the situation. In addition, exclamations or interrogations are used to add strength to the expressions. These direct words or language can have a strong positive or negative effect on other members more so than do the usual affirmative sentences. Irony is also used in multistakeholder groups to describe some important tasks or changes. In such cases, words are generally borrowed and applied from other contexts.

Very different levels of cultural awareness within global multistakeholder groups are a major issue for consensus-building. Actually, when members come from different cultures, it is quite difficult for them to understand or take into consideration or defend cultural values they know nothing about or do not recognise themselves as having any affiliation with. This is further accentuated by the stereotypes people from different cultures have of each other. Religious issues are generally likely to be present in a global multistakeholder group. Apparently, members of global multistakeholder groups avoid discussing religious issues either because they do not grasp the detail of different religious practices or simply because they do not believe religion has its place in the debate. Therefore, it is common that members of such groups avoid getting into religious debates. There is also an issue of diversity in consensus-building and in delegated

groups. Recruiting members mainly from some parts of the world rather than others evidently therefore has an impact on the cultural bias and the outcomes arising from those groups.

9.2.8 Emotions and Consensus

Ashkanasy (2003: 11) contended that emotions might have micro and macro dimensions. The current study has shown that emotions have relational in addition to cognitive aspects. Dreu et al. (2001) contended that emotions have aspects which affect all group members. The current study also confirmed Kelly and Barsade's (2001) conclusions about the affective composition of groups. In fact, emotional characteristics of team members affect the general mood in the group. Furthermore, the study showed that emotion in group situations is essential for group cohesion (Zurher, 1982). The study also confirmed what Lawler (1992) found about the role of emotions as social processes in group formation and maintenance. Group cohesion is influenced by positive and negative emotions in the group (Lawler, 1992; Ashkanasy, 2003).

In a study on LMX, Ashkanasy (2003: 34) argued that positive emotions contributed to better relationships between leaders and members. In the current study, emotions have contributed to the quality of relationships in the group. Relational processes of leadership are directly impacted by the quality of emotions in the group. In addition, emotions are among the signs of shifts in the social order and therefore in leadership. De Rivera (1992: 197) defined emotional climate as an objective phenomenon. Some other studies have shown that emotional intelligence of team members could improve team effectiveness (Druskat and Wolff, 2001; Jordan et al., 2002; Engel, 1993). Organisational climate has been qualified as being the collective mood of organisational members (Ashkanasy et al., 2000; Reichers and Schneider, 1990). Climate is directly related to emotions within the groups (Ashkanasy et al., 2000; Ott, 1989; Schein, 1985). Organisational culture, though more stable than climate, underpins emotional aspects as well (Ashkanasy, 2003: 38).

Ashkanasy and Tse (2000) have emphasised the interconnection between a leader's emotional acumen and group effectiveness. Leaders' emotional acumen has a relationship with group climate. Ashkanasy and Tse's study concentrated on individual leaders. The current study considers emotions in a group as a relational process which is not necessarily the sum of emotions of individual members of the group. The emotions of individual group members

actually create a sort of climate within the group which is more a relational process than a sum of individual acumen or perceptions. The group emotional climate is affected by the interaction of different individual and group emotions.

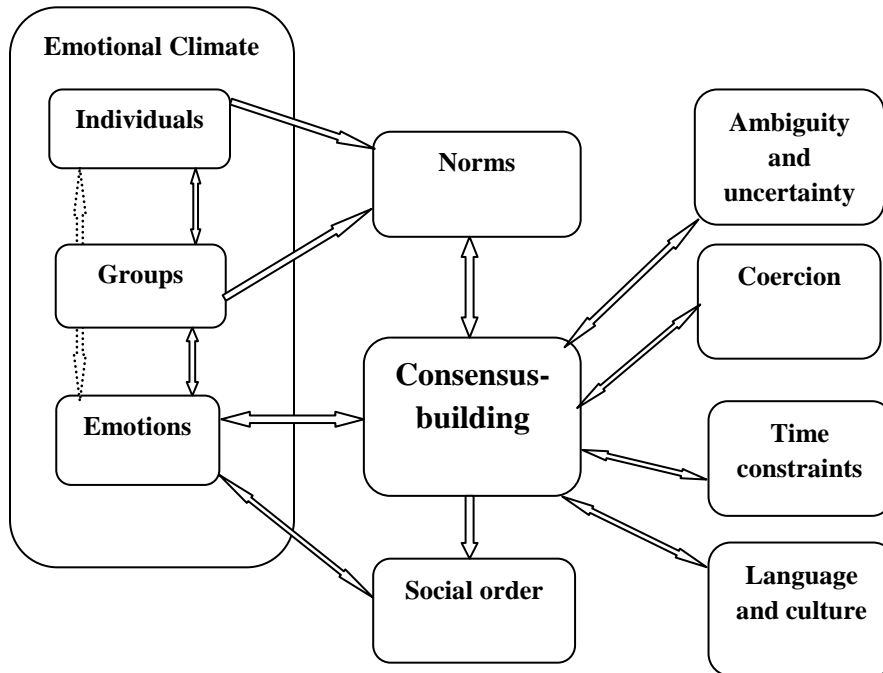


Figure 2: Consensus-building Process

9.3 Legitimacy in a Global Multistakeholder Group

The current study has shown that legitimation is a process (Parsons, 1958) where certain acts, processes, individuals and groups are appraised for their legitimacy. The process of appraising legitimacy is involved in a dynamic of leadership relations where processes of legitimacy play a major role in enhancing leadership activities. However, the study has shown that the values, norms and beliefs against which acts, individuals and groups are appraised, are not necessarily pre-given but can also be emerging. Some values and norms are created in the processes of leadership and are given legitimacy as references for certain situations.

Certain values and norms are privileged because they are highlighted or supported by influential individuals or groups. Indeed, the values and norms conveying legitimacy contribute to the

distribution of power within a social relationship (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). Leadership relational processes as processes of the distribution of power function through a set of norms, values and principles which legitimate those processes. The current study has confirmed that legitimation is a mechanism which mediates between the structure of groups and actions of individuals (Zelditch, 2001: 51).

9.3.1 Levels of Legitimation

The current study has also shown that levels of legitimation are not only related to acts but also to persons, roles, rules and also the structure of relations and groups (Zelditch, 2001: 40). Like Leadership, legitimacy theories have been conceived as a macro phenomenon (Lipset, 1959), meso phenomenon (Dornbush and Scott, 1975) and micro phenomenon (Ridgeway and Berger, 1986). The similarity in levels of analysis between legitimacy and leadership makes it easier to study the contribution of the legitimacy processes to the emergence of leadership processes.

From the current study, it is obvious that legitimation contributes to the stability of the social order of a global multistakeholder group. Multistakeholder groups as social structures are kept stable through a process of legitimation which contributes to the emergence and disbandment of leadership processes. Therefore, the process of leadership is maintained by a degree of legitimacy at any stage of the process. Legitimacy is the result of a certain consensus negotiated following the use of rules, power or both. The study has also highlighted the special influence of countries and international organisations in the global multistakeholder process.

9.3.2 Norms and Legitimacy

The study has shown that norms can also be enabling (Zelditch, 2001: 48). The norms which are created in the group enable leadership processes through processes of legitimation. Though many norms are maintained by consensual agreement, they are used strategically by certain individuals and groups according to their interests and needs (Zelditch, 2001: 49). Therefore, legitimising moves based on specific norms actually convey a certain orientation during processes of leadership or resistance. The norms adopted as a basis for legitimation will often reflect the influence of individuals or groups which contributed in highlighting them.

It is not necessary that all prescribed norms are all strictly followed for specific related situations (Zelditch, 2001: 49). In reality, there are some overarching norms in every setting which are used

in some situations for reference only. Kelman (2001) considers them as indeterminate and flexible. Those norms and values may be used as guidance for more specific norms for particular situations. On one side, leadership relational processes produce the privileged norms at a certain time. On the other side, privileged norms contribute to the dynamics of leadership processes.

9.3.3 Legitimacy as Validation

During processes of leadership, legitimacy grounds are accepted or internalised as ways of either creating turbulence or marking stability. In both cases the social order is reached but with relatively diverse impacts on groups and individuals. Those showing submission actually render themselves subject to the system of power in that situation. Those taking advantage from the situation may benefit from its system of rewards (Zelditch, 2001: 38). A leader or a group of leaders in the group could use collective benefit as a ground for legitimising decisions, acts and choices of individuals or groups (Blau, 1963). By doing so, those legitimising processes are legitimising certain leadership processes. However, it is not always a fact that the legitimising grounds are for the benefit either of the group or the collective. Actually, the causes, conditions, and consequences of the legitimation of rewards and power differ (Zelditch, 2001: 39). Leadership as a modified form of status is therefore directly related to processes of legitimacy (Ridgeway and Berger, 1986; Berger et al., 1998).

The current study has confirmed Weber's (1948) legitimacy theory as being at group level as well as individual level. Legitimacy at the group level is called by Weber (1948) 'validity' or 'validation'. Weber considered legitimation processes as being collective processes rather than individual. Zelditch and Walker (1984) contended that validity which is based on a collective level of legitimacy matters more than propriety which functions more critically at the individual level of legitimacy for maintaining the stability of authority and therefore the social order. The current study has shown that legitimising processes are relational processes in the sense that they are more about mechanisms of legitimacy than legitimacy of entities either individuals or groups. Legitimation is therefore like relational leadership a social construction of the justification of certain acts, roles, procedures or entities.

Validation happens once there is no specific individual or group opposing a specific norm, value or belief (Zelditch and Walker, 1984). Those implicit norms are automatically validated without

being explicitly submitted for the approval of individuals or groups. Whenever consensus is reached there are processes of validation or legitimation of norms, beliefs, acts and procedures. Validation itself is a sort of consensus on the consensus to be reached. At the same time validating those norms, beliefs, acts and procedures is actually an act of legitimation of the leadership processes connected with them. Zelditch (2001: 46) contended that collective validation has large effects on the stability of the social order.

The current study has also shown that processes of legitimation in a global multistakeholder group also comprise of aspects of de-legitimation (Kelman, 2001). In fact, legitimation and delegitimation have run in parallel with the processes of construction and disbandment of leadership. The lack of fairness in a group may lead to a process of de-legitimation which may create pressures for reform or rebellion (Kelman, 2001). Chakravarthy and Gargiulo (1998) contended that reform or rebellion can start with passive forms of resistance which have the potential to become a challenge to leadership authority. The current study showed that some individuals and groups losing their legitimacy or power resort to tacit or passive resistance before engaging in processes of de-legitimation of acts, leaders, procedures and consensus.

9.3.4 Leadership and Legitimacy

9.3.4.1 Stakeholders and Legitimacy

The current study has shown that support of the process of consensus-building in a global multistakeholder group relies on the satisfaction of the interests of key stakeholders (Bendix, 1956). In the absence of satisfaction of their interests, it is likely they would attempt to destabilise the process as a whole (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). The process of balance between satisfying the interests of stakeholders and reaching the objective of the global multistakeholder group involves different processes of leadership. There are cases where some stakeholder groups or their members use passive resistance as a tool to show their dissatisfaction (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). This passive resistance may become converted into active resistance which could include jeopardising the existence of the global multistakeholder group or simply challenging authority within the group (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998).

The essence of legitimacy of a global multistakeholder group is based on the legitimacy provided by the stakeholder groups constituting it. Therefore, stakeholder groups need to be satisfied in

order to remain within the group which is the minimum for maintaining legitimacy. It is obvious that the leaders of the global multistakeholder group might satisfy some stakeholders more than others. They may also move forward when realising that a certain stakeholder group is dissatisfied. This however will happen only when the leadership of the global multistakeholder group has enough resources to prevent a substantial damage to its structure and process (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). The leadership of the group will need to increase the inducements made to the unsatisfied stakeholders. Notwithstanding, it is likely that a group of unsatisfied stakeholders for an extended period of time gather all conditions for an explosion at the first opportunity of creating a crisis in the social order. The current study has shown that relying solely on inducements paid to the different stakeholder groups is not enough to keep a global multistakeholder group together (Crozier, 1975: 114). The group needs to make sure consensus-building is not just a top-down process but a process that is felt to be sufficiently comprehensive of all (Sewell, 1996; Zelditch and Floyd, 1998).

Global multistakeholder groups can use pacts with stakeholders in order to balance between contributions and inducements and therefore sustain a certain social order (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). Stakeholder participation therefore requires more than maintaining a simple balance between inducements and participation as it is portrayed in Cyert and March's (1963) model of coalitional legitimacy. The pacts could entail pre-given or de facto norms or simply compromises which are reached on certain issues of content or process. Pacts also contribute to leadership processes by legitimising processes, groups and individuals and therefore contributing to the reorganisation of leadership relationships. Pacts contribute to legitimising leadership changes in the setting through a legitimation of procedures (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). The legitimation of decisions, acts, individuals and groups through structures of participation and interest representation legitimises leadership relationships and social order as a whole (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998).

9.3.4.2 Legitimising Structures of Participation

In a global multistakeholder group, the communication process facilitates the exercise of voice and the generation of loyalty through compromises reached among stakeholder groups (Hirschman, 1970). Conflict is resolved through a participative system where all stakeholders have a voice. This voice system is itself a system of control of social order within the group

(Hirschman, 1970). Stakeholder groups control each other through the norms approved and created without having to function through a central authority giving orders (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). The leadership in a global stakeholder group is limited to sensemaking the demands and positions of the different stakeholder groups and converting them into group ideas. The social construction of leadership processes is therefore not only the result of members' own mental models but also part of the picture drawn by the group leader's social construction. Nevertheless, it is not as absolute as it may seem in Chakravarthy and Gargiulo's (1998) case.

The leader's perspective is not always taken for granted in a global multistakeholder group. It is the interaction between the perspectives of all members in a group that defines what is wrong and right. It is true that stakeholder groups taken individually do not have the same consideration but still contribute to the group perspective as a whole. In a global multistakeholder group, the leader, as a person, is just a moderator who cannot decide individually or consistently impose a unilateral perspective on the stakeholder groups. It is different from an entity perspective to leadership where the leader is an extraordinary person leading the show (Dachler and Hosking, 1995). Leadership is therefore a social construction of the interaction between the perspectives of stakeholder groups. It is though obvious that stakeholder groups are represented through individuals. It is possible that social order resulting from the interaction of stakeholder groups' perspectives coincide with interests and preferences of stakeholder groups' members (Kelman, 2001).

9.3.5 Instrumental, Conceptual and Symbolic Modes of Legitimation

Symbolic utilization uses information from the scientific realm to legitimise managerial decisions, actions or ideas (Astley and Zammuto, 1992). As Bourdieu (1996) described the field of power as an arena of struggle among different capital holders, the study has shown that different capital holders attempt to justify their decisions and actions by referring to the scientific realm (Astley and Zammuto, 1992). In some other cases, they attempt to justify the acts and decisions by referring to the legitimacy of individuals or groups involved in a specific situation. There is frequent use of competence and reputation of a person, group or document as basis for including them or their initiatives into the field of construction of knowledge in the setting (Bourdieu, 1996: 291). The use of symbolic capital in this context seeks to legitimise acts

of domination (Swartz, 2008). There are also processes of legitimation which arise during the modification of text and reference to external initiatives.

One of the main tasks when writing ISO Standards is drafting text and changing it according to comments received from participants. Changing text requires ‘stakeholder balanced’ approval. Furthermore, textual changes should respond to a strict interpretation of comments and inputs from group members. Nevertheless, the interpretation derived from the thousands of submitted comments has always been an issue. Inevitably, it is difficult to decide on the matter when multiple comments and alternatives have been raised. The person or group of people who interpret the comments will have to decide and therefore apply their own understanding of the problem. Consequently, there will always be an element of bias, unless the interpretation is achieved within a group that can reach an acceptable consensus. Seeing that it is not possible to discuss thousands of comments in one meeting, in the end, one person has to work on the comments and therefore, some of the comments will not be considered any further whatsoever.

It is common for the debate over text in the multistakeholder group to focus on different interpretations of comments or agreements. It was clear on many occasions that the legitimacy of the text depended on the current degree of respect for the consensus previously reached. The debate could also be over the legitimacy of a delegated group to commence changes to the text that were not required by the delegating group. In this type of global multistakeholder group, text cannot be modified during certain stages of the process of consensus. Additional text will in general be accepted only when it fits exactly with the consensus already established. In general, changing text requires the approval of stakeholders. It is true that comments give some cues and orientation to drafters. Nevertheless, it is the interpretation of those comments that shapes the new text. The interpretation of the comments and the precise way to implement them depends on the members who are doing the drafting. Different members may question different interpretations. However, the drafters will have to agree on the final wording once the text has been drafted, as it then becomes quite difficult to change.

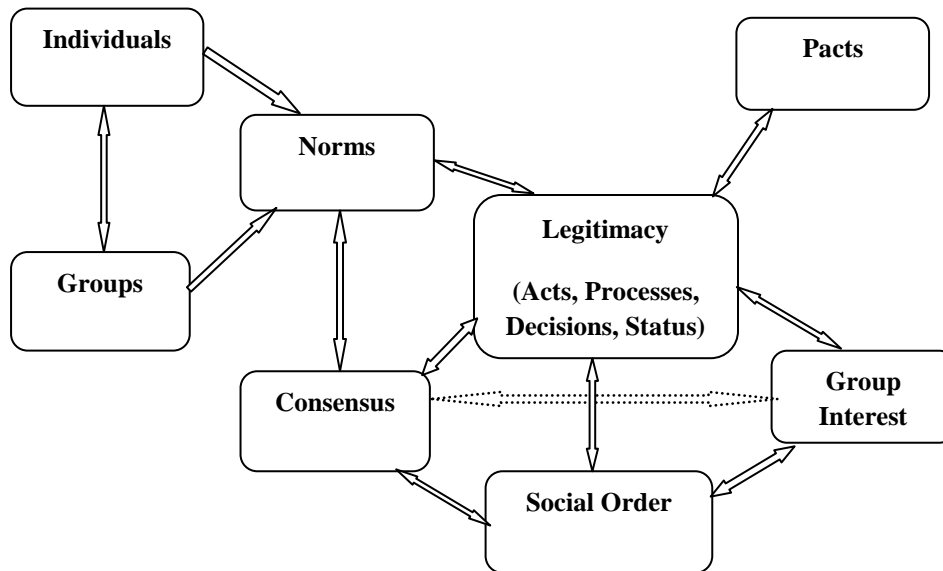


Figure 3: Legitimizing Process

9.4 A Theory of Delegation to Groups in a Global Multistakeholder Setting

Delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group may be defined as the process of assigning some general or specific tasks from a larger group (delegating group) to a smaller group (delegated group). Authority and responsibility given to the delegated group could be conditional or open. Delegation to groups is conditional when the delegated group takes decisions but still has to get them approved by the delegating group. Delegation to groups is open when the delegated group takes decisions without referring to the delegating group. It is therefore clear that delegation to individuals is similar to delegation to groups in its general definition (Yukl and Fu, 1999). However it is different from it in terms of the membership, processes and actors involved.

In general, delegation from a manager to a subordinate is the traditional focus of research study across the majority of delegation studies (e.g. Leana, 1985, 1986, 1987; Hackman and Dunphy, 1990; Engel, 1993; Yukl, 1994; Yukl and Fu, 1999). This thesis research study investigates delegation to groups and processes governing delegation to groups by other groups situated in a global multistakeholder setting. Overall, the processes of delegation to groups involve processes of consensus, legitimation and leadership.

9.4.1 Rationale for Delegation to Groups

The creation of delegated groups depends on situations and circumstances. They are created as a means of reaching consensus which can be rather difficult to achieve in a larger group; smaller sub-groups are sometimes created specifically to facilitate the process of consensus-building. In delegation to groups within a global multistakeholder group, there was not clear evidence that delegation is an attempt to shift blame for organizational problems from top management to other organization's members as found in the study by Leana (1987). There is a shift of responsibility from the delegating group to the delegated group but it is combined with substantial transfer of decision power. Generally, the way forward is to form a new stakeholder balanced group for discussion of an issue. The delegated group task is to bring an agreement back to the delegating group.

Delegating work to smaller groups within a global multistakeholder group could be perceived as a 'technique' of 'elitizing' a group's work. Presumably, select and influential members will like to work together therefore making the process of negotiating texts more efficient. In delegation to groups in global multistakeholder groups, members of the delegated group do not necessarily have competence and goal congruence as in Yukl and Fu (1999). Stakeholder balance is more important in the constitution of groups. Nevertheless, over time members showing exceptional competence will be likely appointed in more delegated work than others (Yukl and Fu, 1999). Another reason is that members use group delegation to ensure their interests and ideologies are preserved. Delegating to smaller groups can also be perceived as an attempt to ensure the best way of reaching a satisfactory consensus. In some cases, the reason for delegation is specific to the task; once accomplished, the group is no longer required and is therefore disbanded. Delegation to smaller teams can also be seen as both a means and justification for reaching rapid consensus.

Delegation to groups is also used for conflict management purposes. In some situations, the delegating group delegates some tasks or issues whenever the group fails to reach a consensus. Delegation to groups is used as a way of reducing tension among members and groups. Therefore, they choose to delegate to resolve conflict and achieve consensus. Delegation may also be justified simply due to time constraints. It can be implemented to save time after several attempts at consensus-building within the larger group. Delegation to smaller groups can also be

seen to be used as an attempt to postpone decisions about issues or avoid making decisions. It can also be used as an attempt to prevent others from recalling the issue, instead, proceeding with the current discussion.

Illusionary power equalization (Gemmill and Oakley, 1992) in delegation to groups within multistakeholder groups does not necessarily take place. During every act of delegation, the balance of stakeholders is taken into consideration. The illusion may happen for some individuals from certain stakeholder groups. However, it cannot happen to all stakeholder groups taken as a whole. The processes of consensus-building including delegation to groups need to get validated by all stakeholder groups to be considered legitimate. Furthermore, the size of small delegated groups makes it difficult, if not impossible, for all members to contribute. Indeed, the optimal delegated group size and its impact on the outcome on individuals, groups and tasks is still to be further researched.

9.4.2. Consensus-building in Delegated Groups

Generally, consensus in delegated groups is reached gradually. In most cases, consensus is developed through some informal delegated groups before putting the issue to discussion within the larger group. This process is preferred as it saves time and energy in debating in larger groups when issues can be resolved in smaller groups. Delegation generally goes from a larger group to a smaller group. In some exceptions, a smaller group will send back the right for decision-making to the larger group. This happens when they fail to reach agreement or in cases where they feel they do not have the proper mandate to decide on the larger group's behalf.

Some members with greater symbolic capital know that they can exert greater influence by working in smaller groups. In larger groups all members, including those with superficial knowledge of the issues, can participate. In smaller groups, only those with specific knowledge of the issues under debate can contribute. Moreover, smaller delegated groups tend to be more professional in addressing the specific tasks and technicalities at hand rather than discussing them in a larger group. Members of smaller groups feel the need to reach an agreement and revert to the whole group with a viable solution. Their reputation within the group might be at stake when they fail to reach a consensus on the delegated task. It is obvious that decision-making to a smaller group is easier and the process of consensus-building is often smoother.

Nevertheless, a substantial number of members are indirectly ejected from the process from the simple necessity to form smaller delegated groups.

Consultation in delegated groups is gradually built up in different levels to reach consensus. The purpose is not only to gather sufficient endorsement for a specific issue (Yukl and Fu, 1999). It is also to enrich the debate with new ideas from members not directly involved in the consensus-building process. Consultation in global multistakeholder groups is conducted among peers and not between managers and one or more subordinates (Yukl and Fu, 1999). The chair of the delegated group will generally ensure that every stakeholder group is effectively consulted. It is more a sort of joint decision-making (Yukl and Fu, 1999) than a consultation where a manager has more influence in the decision (Vroom and Yetton, 1973; Vroom and Jago, 1988). Unlike Leana's (1987) finding about the weak negative correlation between subordinate competence and joint decision-making, delegation or consultation in global multistakeholder groups does primarily depend on the delegated group members' competence but on obtaining stakeholder balance. Consultation therefore empowers some of the delegated group members who contribute significantly to leadership processes (Yukl and Fu, 1999). Individuals and groups who are consulted are perceived as possessing more influence than other individuals or groups. Consultation also significantly contributes to consensus-building (Yukl and Fu, 1999).

The process of consultation in global multistakeholder groups may be conducted face to face through email, messenger or telephone conferencing. Consultation may target only a specific group from within the delegating group. This limits the consultation to groups or individuals which are directly concerned with that issue. Consultation is sometimes sought from only a group of leaders and not from all of the drafters. Time together also plays an important role in increasing or decreasing the frequency of consultation in a delegated group. As in LMX theory, it is clear that members in a delegated group develop a favourable exchange relationship (Graen and Scandura, 1987). However, loyalty and trust in the exchange relationship could not be considered as significant in allocating more responsibility to other members (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995).

9.4.3 Mandate in Delegation to Groups

In global multistakeholder groups, the mandate of a delegated group is commonly defined through pre-given agendas and rules in addition to delegating group members' expectations. The mandate may be defined through written discourse usually coming from the leaders to ensure that all participants are informed about the extent of their work. Comments and suggestions from different participants are therefore taken into consideration before they become a mandate. Clearly, varying interests combined with vague mandates can lead to confusion. This way some or all members would sometimes have the impression that the group has no specific mandate. The confusion resulting from the ambiguity of the mandate of a delegated group can lead to continued institutionalization of pre-established norms by its members. In practice, ambiguity gives some members a large margin to manoeuvre the procedures and norms. Different interpretations of some issues give the opportunity for influential members to impose their own views. In some situations, norms that were created by the delegated group are later disregarded.

The mandate for a single delegated group is often easier to define and monitor over time than a mandate set for several delegated groups. Assigning a single delegated group the task of drafting a whole document has many advantages since it is easier for a single group's members to frequently meet face-to-face in different parts of the world. It is also cheaper for members of a small group to meet with each other. It is also easier for sponsoring organisations to cover some of the group members' expenses. Moreover, a single delegated group is often more integrated and focused on the task than are several groups undertaking single tasks. It is likely those groups will have an incoherent vision about the overarching task and expectations of the whole group. A single delegated group meeting frequently is also likely to perform better than are several delegated groups working separately on only part of the overall task. This might be explained by the improvement in group climate and greater goal congruence when working within a single group.

Delegated groups with no set specific deadlines for reviewing their mandate incite a climate of suspicion and contestation. Members of the delegating group would usually feel that the delegated group may be tempted to abuse its overall mandate. When no measures are taken to address complaints, the delegating group could put the legitimacy of the whole process of delegation and even the outcome into question. Not defining the extent and duration and

checkpoints of the delegated group mandate raises tension. Furthermore, influential members in delegated groups become freer to interpret pre-given or emerging norms according to their own preferred understanding. In general, the extent of the mandate of a delegated group is less energetically questioned so long as the outcome does not contradict members' expectations and where there is an absence of any crisis.

Members in a global multistakeholder group frequently find themselves in a predicament as to whether they have the power to act and thus have the authority to make decisions within the delegated group. Often, approvals need to be obtained from their stakeholder groups before any decisions can be made. Frequently, there is no specific mandate clarifying whether or not stakeholder members have the authority to defend and justify or to make a decision on issues. In technical committees, members have full representation that allows them to discuss and vote without referring to legitimating authority. In working groups, members have the freedom to debate as independent experts but will have to abide by their legitimating authority's status and position, which could be a stakeholder group or a country or an international organisation. Therefore, there is a difference between the mandate for discussion and the mandate for decision-making or voting. Delegation to a group may be delegation solely for the purpose of discussion and not for decision-making or voting.

9.4.4 Norms in Delegation to Groups

Ambiguity within delegated groups constantly makes it difficult to proceed and make progress. Many norms for the group's functioning are often created on the spot while discussing issues. Further, not applying clear norms is in itself a normative form of behaviour. This inevitably causes the rules or mandate to change continuously. Logically, when the group members do not have clear ideas on the way forward, it is somewhat easier to create norms that can be followed. It is during the process of drafting text that norms are commonly formulated, particularly when there is no specific direction to opinions held within the group.

Members with specific experience in a particular field usually play a leading authority role in setting the norms and in building up small task groups. There are also team members who become experts in some of the fields in discussion. Indeed, some members assume leading roles in drafting text due to their expertise and experience in specific fields. Unmistakably, members

gain their leadership status either from acknowledgement of their expertise in a particular field or through cumulated agreement on their status within the group. They can quickly become a reference point for the majority of issues. By assuming this status, those members have the capacity to lead the team in improvising solutions especially in times of ambiguity.

In the ISO2600 meetings, norms were changed according to the task and the stage of development of the task. The rules applicable to the team at any one point were usually agreed between the chairman and the members conducting a specific task in the delegated group. Therefore, the leader can establish new rules based on an initiative taken by some members and then later gain their approval from the whole delegated group. Logically, it depends on the status of the member within the group to be able to initiate new or revised norms. Should the particular member not be seen as significant or stand out within the group, the proposal is more likely to be rejected. This was especially the case whenever the proposal to the rule was perceived as likely to affect the status of individuals or organisations.

9.4.5 Membership in Delegation to Groups

In global multistakeholder groups, nomination of members of delegated groups is based on stakeholder balanced representation. Some representatives of influential international organisations are also allowed to join. Usually, each stakeholder group nominates one or more members. Delegation may be through appointment especially when the members are involved in drafting specific parts of the text. It can also be by self-selection when members show their particular interest and enthusiasm. In other cases the chair may ask stakeholders to nominate their representatives to attend a certain delegated group. In all such cases stakeholder balance is respected. It is common that the leader of the delegated group would request members to volunteer to become members of a specific smaller group. It is also common that all stakeholder groups would ensure they are represented within these smaller groups.

At the time of constitution of delegated groups, the criterion of country of origin or development level is not taken into consideration unless there is pressure from developing countries. Some leaders seem to believe that competence and stakeholder balance are the only criterion to be considered for membership of delegated groups. Other members and groups demonstrate belief in other criteria such as geographical and development standard advocating that they have also to

be taken into consideration. Cultural issues may also be regarded as one of the criterion for membership of delegated groups. Inevitably, creating smaller groups reduces the number of members and certainly has an impact on the balance of interests.

In a global multistakeholder group, face-to-face meetings between delegated groups create a considerable amount of workload for members. Delegated groups could occasionally invite observers or other external members to become part of the delegated group. In some cases, the leaders of the group seek to use long-serving and well-known drafters from outside the delegated group for some specific tasks. Observers were also allowed to speak and contribute to some drafting and screening tasks. It is likely that observers will be allowed to contribute to delegated groups' tasks at later stages of the process. This could be explained by two factors: The first is that in later meetings controversial issues are likely to be fewer and therefore some members with no drafting legitimacy such as observers are allowed in. The second is that friendship between delegated groups' members could become greater during the later stages of the process.

9.4.6 Distribution of Tasks in Delegation to Groups

Tasks occurring in a context that is characterized by a clear lack of rules and procedures are distributed according to the needs of the group and the evaluation of the leaders. Generally, the chairman would announce the task and wait for a response from members to accept it. Within delegated groups drafting standards, one member will usually be assigned to collate and review the comments before the text is brought forward to be finalized in the plenary. Therefore, the small group reaches agreement on the main points and then delegates drafting to one person. This person is, in effect, concretizing in documented written text the consensus that has been reached within the group. Therefore, it can be assumed by members that this text is the result of a consensus or that the text reflects the level of consensus reached within the delegated group. The extent of consensus is also reflected in the outcome of the text that varies depending on interests and expectations of the delegated group. This further shows that there is no actual degree of consistency on how tasks are detailed by individual members.

Normally, the chairman would prepare in advance to address those issues in detail in smaller groups. He then reverts to discussing them in greater detail during the plenary. Therefore, the preparation and organisation of tasks is considered substantial within delegated groups in global

multistakeholder group settings. Sometimes, the chairman would show his/her intention of proceeding with some work in order to get other members more involved. There are some members who volunteer to prepare ideas and documents, and statistics, etc. Those actions are usually accepted as a starting point for discussion. It can be assumed that members have ideas to share and will be proactive in executing work and advancing practical proposals. An individual may not be one of the key persons but he/she can gain special 'status' if he/she sustains a reputation for continuously initiating ideas and actions in the process.

Defining responsibilities in the group can become a subject of controversy between members. Generally, not all members contribute equally to the tasks assigned to them. The actual level and distribution of individual contributions differs from group to group. This can cause members to disagree on the outcome and leads them to question the legitimacy of the mandate given.

In contradiction with Vroom and Yetton (1973), it is not necessary to have high goal congruence for successful consultation in delegated groups. In a global multistakeholder group, it is common to have individuals and groups collaborating in some situations with contradictory goal congruence. In spite of that, dissensus can still take place because consultation with the most obvious opinions and trends needs to take place in order to hold the group together and ultimately reaches satisfaction of at least some of its diverse and principal objectives.

9.4.7 Delegation to Groups and Organisational Outcome

There is a positive relationship between delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group and attainment of organisational goals. The more there is delegation to groups the more consensus is reached. Meanwhile, leadership processes are located in these processes of delegation to groups. These processes of delegation to groups also give opportunities for a complex set of legitimising processes. Processes of delegation to groups lead to the emergence of leaders either individuals or groups; Delegation allows the emergence of some leaders who would have never been given the opportunity to show their skills in the larger group. This is a confirmation of some studies which showed that delegating more decision-making activity improves productivity and performance (Bennis, 1989). Moreover, delegation to groups has a positive impact on organizational outcomes. Nevertheless, delegation to groups has shown an

ambiguous impact on job satisfaction (Pellegrini and Scandura, 2006). Certain members might feel satisfied while others could complain about frequent delegation to groups.

Not maintaining minutes of delegated group work can lead to disagreement. The lack of record-keeping might entail discussion of items over again and then lead to loss of time and lack of progress. People who report from small group work generally talk about the main issues that they dealt with. Often, members don't take notes; which means that they lose track of a lot of what was said. Not keeping records by secretaries in delegated groups certainly becomes an issue especially when it comes to reporting on discussions and decisions. The lack of maintaining and providing access to accurate records can fuel tension among members.

9.4.8 Delegation to Groups and Leadership Relationships

Most of the studies on the relationship between delegation and leadership link delegation with the LMX theory of leadership (e.g. Schriesheim et al., 1998; Pellegrini and Scandura, 2006). Many researchers have looked at leadership from an entitative rather than a relational perspective. The current study attempts to develop an understanding of the relationship between relational perspectives on leadership and delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group. Delegation to groups in a multistakeholder setting works in a low quality group the same as in a high quality group which is different from what has been argued in Schriesheim et al. (1998). Delegation to groups even serves as an appeaser of conflict and enhancer of consensus in delegated groups. Successful outcomes from delegated groups improve the quality of relationships in the delegating group. Therefore, delegation to groups as a relational process creates favourable conditions for leadership relationships in the delegating group (Liden et al., 2000). Actually, delegation to groups has an impact on leadership relationships in the delegating group either towards formation or sustainment of leadership or towards disbandment of other leadership relationships. Nevertheless, excessive delegation to groups in a multistakeholder group can deteriorate the quality of relationships in the delegating group.

This study has shown that delegation to groups does not necessarily require high quality leadership relationships, which is slightly different from what Ansari et al. (2007) report on delegation and LMX in Malaysia. It is apparent that leadership relationships influence the frequency of delegation to groups (Ansari et al., 2007). This study has also confirmed that

delegation to groups is more likely to be considered successful when the delegated group members have the job knowledge required (Yukl and Fu, 1999). It is though not always necessary to have the job knowledge in a multistakeholder balanced delegated group to perform the job. Furthermore, delegation to groups is more often found to be successful when the delegating and the delegated group have the same task objectives (Vroom and Yetton, 1973).

9.4.9 Summary of Delegation to Groups

Former research has shown that delegation works best in high quality LMX groups compared to low quality groups (Schriesheim, Neider, and Scandura, 1998). The current study has shown that the quality of relationships in the group affects the performance of the sub-groups to which tasks were delegated. Delegation to groups in global multistakeholder groups is from a group of stakeholders to another group of stakeholders having the same status. This form of delegation is different from the traditional delegation between a manager and a subordinate. In a global multistakeholder group, there is a mixture of consensus-building processes through consultation and delegation to groups. It has been obvious that delegation is preferred to consultation when the group is short of time and the workload is more than the larger group can afford (Heller and Yukl, 1969).

The current study has also shown that delegation to groups does not necessarily require that the delegating and delegated group have the same task objective. This is different from what Vroom and Yetton (1973) found occurs between a manager and a subordinate. However, the current study confirms Leana's (1986) conclusion on the absence of a correlation between goal congruence and delegation between a manager and a subordinate. In multistakeholder groups, it may be possible to achieve commonly assigned outcome objectives. However, the quality of the outcome will be moderated by the degree of consensus within the group.

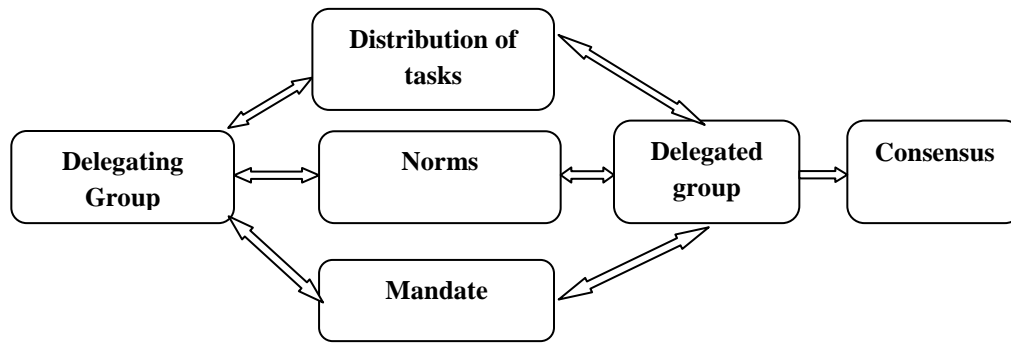


Figure 4: Delegation to Groups Process

9.5 Relational Leadership in a Global Multistakeholder Group

9.5.1 Construction of Leadership Relationships

9.5.1.1 Social Construction of Knowledge and Leadership

In global multistakeholder groups, leadership relationships are mediated by legitimacy, delegation and consensus-building. However, in this study people are not considered as independent entities but as people who make contributions to the network of relationships. Relational leadership is socially constructed and distributed within the multistakeholder group. Leadership shifts among individuals and groups in the working group are socially constructed. Leadership is dependent on how the members of the group allocate leadership status according to situations. It is through these relational dynamics that leaders either lose their leadership influence or gain better positions.

Knowledge is constructed and distributed in the context of a global multistakeholder group according to a complex set of relationships in the group. The processes of legitimacy, consensus and delegation to groups ensure the construction and distribution of knowledge according to leadership positions. Knowledge comes from the interaction between leaders who in their struggle for either defending their own positions or ideologies or interests produce a form of knowledge which is legitimised as being part of the knowledge of the group. This knowledge is either approved, accepted or rejected by the members of the group as whole or sometimes other stakeholders who are not members of the group. The knowledge is constructed and distributed in the group and approved or disapproved by members and the rest of the group by following a process of sensemaking of all events, acts and relationships in the group. According to Weick

(1995), knowing is viewed as an ongoing process of meaning making. Hence, in a relational constructionist perspective, what is and how we know it are viewed as ongoing achievements constructed in sequences of acts/events (Hosking, 2000).

9.5.1.2 Constructing Knowledge through Language

Relational perspectives share an emphasis on communication and on language as a means of communication (Fairhurst and Putnam, 2004). Text is thought of as a narrative on the way something could be understood (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). The meaning making within the group is constructed through language as a way of communication. Language is text, spoken language or body language. As is the case in standards development contexts, text is the principal means of meaning making. The exchange of text and the construction of different versions of text allow members to make sense of the leadership shifts within the multi-stakeholder working group context. The supremacy of some sort of text over other types of text is actually the supremacy of certain categories of individuals or groups over others. The text produced is the result of the struggle between different individuals and groups. Obviously there are some ideas which get approved and integrated and others which are rejected. In this process of approbation and rejection, there are leadership relationships which are constructed and others which are disbanded. The legitimation of text as an outcome is actually the legitimation of the leadership relationship resulting from the struggle for the construction of text. Therefore, the meaning making performed by members of the groups based on text as an outcome is meaning making arising from leadership processes or relationships.

Researchers who follow relational approaches see dialogue as a dialectical movement between and among human phenomena in which true interaction or real meaning emerges in the 'space between' (Bradbury and Lichtenstein, 2000). The 'space between' in the case of a context of standards development could be considered as the text coming out from the interaction between leaders within the group and as sensed by the rest of the group. The continuous process of conversation and negotiation of text within the group is actually the negotiation of leadership positions that shift continuously. Some acts or events of resistance and opposition, for example, might show some kind of loss of leadership. Some other acts of resistance may show a willingness to keep the social status quo (Levy, 2010). Obviously the interaction of leaders and members gives rise to the social construction of leadership relationships. Through

communication, members make sense of the ongoing shifts in the leadership relationships and endeavour to situate themselves accordingly as they see best.

There were some aspects of interpersonal influence or personal domination as separate cases in the working group. However, those acts were part of larger processes of dialogue among members while constructing knowledge (Drath, 2001). The group members, while communicating, construct knowledge through discourse. Leadership processes are constructed while group members are making sense of those processes of communicating. All members contribute in some way or other in the construction of knowledge such as drafting of standards in this case. Therefore, there is a collective construction of reality which entails leadership relationships which are more complex than simply the traits of individuals contributing to the construction. Leadership is the combination of individuals and groups interacting and communicating in a context. Members make sense of leadership processes while making sense of the knowledge constructed.

9.5.2 The Limits of Entity Perspectives to Leadership

Subject-object theories of leadership consider the relationship of influence of leadership from an individual perspective. They fail to consider the context in which the events happen. They also fail to consider the complex nature of the human mind while approaching any situation; the human mind looks at phenomena as a multitude of subjects and objects interacting with each other. It is through the relationships perceived between those subjects and objects that perceptions are made of the external environment. Leadership is one of the constructions of the human mind and a result of the relationships perceived. Actually, the human mind constructs a leadership influence as being a relationship where some actors play roles. Therefore, leadership is perceived by humans first and foremost as relational. Focusing on content issues does not reflect reality because content issues are an emergent reflection of socially constructed realities in constant change (Rost, 1991). The same applies to leadership; leadership processes are a better reflection of reality. Social networks theory combined with leadership theory (Balkundi and Kilduff, 2005) present an initial understanding of leadership as a relational process. However, it failed to highlight relational leadership as a social construction (Hosking et al., 1995).

Mature leadership relationships strengthen team spirit and interests (Burns, 1978). Some leading members who could be critical of the group in the beginning might start defending its work based on their membership and direct experience of the group. In fact, members develop strong affiliation relationships amongst themselves. They also start feeling that the team belongs to them and that the outcome of the group is also theirs. The maturity of the relationship reached at a later stage improves the performance of IDTF. Consequently, the outcome is improved as well (Locke and Latham, 1991).

9.5.3 Relational Perspectives to Leadership and Social Order

Most of the leadership approaches are destined to examine the relationship between a manager and a subordinate working in the same hierarchical organisation. Actually leadership can occur in any direction (Rost, 1991, 1995) and not only between a superior and a subordinate. This study has shown that leadership is a process which happens at all levels of the organisation and not only at the managerial level. It seems that leadership is about people and their environment who while interacting in the setting build relationships of leadership. People involved in the setting draw in their minds pictures of the leadership relationships. They therefore make sense of people who play an influential leadership role and those who lose their leading roles. Therefore people make sense of leadership relationships through a collective focus and not necessarily based on an individual focus of interest and interpretation. People do not look for single individuals to be assigned leadership positions, but try to make sense of leadership situations where different processes of leadership will often happen simultaneously.

Relational leadership in multistakeholder groups is a social construction of leadership relationships through the struggle of different groups and individuals seeking to empower their ideas, ideologies and interests. The construction of relational leadership is performed through processes of social influence which happen during communication between different members and groups and which give rise to a continually modified social order. The leadership processes may contribute significantly to shifts in the social order (Hosking and Morley, 1988). The situations of groups and individuals and texts change which creates new relationships and new realities which are immediately sensed by participants. People can sense a change in leadership dispositions when they see text defended by certain individuals or when other groups are privileged or excluded. They can also see the changes in relationships between groups or

individuals; consequently, some groups or individuals will get greater attention or respect than others and vice versa.

9.5.4 Approaching Relational Leadership Processes

From this study it appears obvious that it is difficult to establish a clear difference between acts of leadership and other acts within a context. Different groups and individuals at the same time interact to reach agreements where the interests of most of the participating parties are met. There are many acts which can be considered as leadership such as bringing in new text, defending text, rejecting text, reaching consensus, legitimising and de-legitimising groups, individuals or text or actions, agreeing or opposing or resisting. It is also possible to perceive leadership whenever there are shifts in approaches. Generally, the change of command either in a positive or negative way would involve a change of approach either towards improvement or deterioration (Hogg, 2005). Similarly, shifts in goals (Hogg, 2005) may indicate a change in leadership relational processes. It is not necessary that the goals be major or decisive to generate a leadership influence relationship. There are cases where tactical changes in goals may have a significant effect on the outcome.

Adopting leadership as a modified form of status (Dachler and Hosking, 1995) may help highlighting acts of leadership. The change in status of some individuals and groups is perceived by members as a change in leadership. It is quite difficult to know how human beings make sense of the modification in status. It is possible that they use the information stored in their mind to compare the behaviour of individuals and groups with each other and relate it to the context during a specific period of time. It is also possible that they analyse positions and behaviours of individuals and groups over an extended period of time. They would tend to deliberate about the leadership situation when they notice changes. It is also possible that the relational processes are considered to be leadership when they seem to be contributing to the emergence of the social order (Hosking and Morley, 1988). This social order could be sensed whenever an obvious shift in circumstances and dispositions of individuals and groups is perceived as different from the previous ones.

9.5.5 Application of Bourdieu’s Conceptual Tools to Relational Leadership

This study had the challenge of linking the psychological perspective of leadership with the sociological perspective of Bourdieu’s relational sociology. This thesis is offered as a contribution that can help to open the door to further research on relational leadership. This study attempted to simultaneously use the three main concepts of Bourdieu namely, habitus, capital and field in addition to his theory of practice. The purpose is to link them together in order to explain the construction and disbandment of leadership relationships in a global multistakeholder group. The three main concepts of habitus, capital and field representing different levels of analysis contribute to a relational analysis by linking micro and macro levels (Swartz, 2008: 50).

Bourdieu’s Theroetical Concepts	Examples from the Research Setting
Habitus, Dispositions, Hexis, Social Position	Stakeholder Groups in the ISO 26000 WGSR, Countries, International Organisations, Delegated Groups, Individual Experts and Observers, Development of Relationships in the Group over Time, Acts of Organising: Consensus-building and Delegation to Groups.
Capital	Resources Available through Stakeholders, the Sense of Legitimacy Given to Members of Stakeholder Groups, International Organisations and Countries because of Membership, Power Resources such as: Differences in Experience of Standards Development, Negotiation and Reputation.
Field	The ISO 26000 WGSR as a Space of Interaction and a Specialist Field for Standards Development.
Practice	Norms’ Creation, Knowledge Produced in the Setting and Text Produced.

Table 6: Application of Bourdieu’s Theoretical Concepts to the Research Setting

In this section, I analyse relational leadership processes and their organising acts of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups through the concepts of habitus, capital, field and

practice. I start by allocating practical examples of the four concepts within the setting of the ISO 26000 WGSR. Later on, I analyse the research questions through the four relational concepts one by one. The connections between Bourdieu's concepts and relational leadership are elaborated in Figure 5.

9.5.5.1 Habitus and Dispositions in the ISO 26000 WGSR

Habitus in the ISO 26000 WGSR encloses all sorts of actors in the interaction in addition to the relationships developed in the setting over time. It is a complex set of networks of habitual or typical condition of actors and the relationships built up during processes of interaction (Jenkins, 2007: 74). The habitus in this setting also concerns the state of actors in the interaction (Jenkins, 2007: 74). It is also about individuals interacting within the setting and building up relationships and producing knowledge. Habitus also addresses the state or appearance which is acquired by actors in the interaction and the groups they form (Bourdieu, 1977). Their appearance is adjusted according to the conditions in the field which is the ISO 26000 WGSR in this study.

The style in which actors interact in the setting and which gives place to leadership relationships is known as "hexis" by Bourdieu (Jenkins, 2007: 75). Hexis entails the combination between the interaction of individual experts and observers with the groups and networks in the research setting such as stakeholder and delegated groups (Bourdieu, 1977). The interaction between experts and the environment in the ISO 26000 WGSR is actually an interaction between their subjective perception of themselves and the multistakeholder environment in which they interact (Jenkins, 2007: 75). The interaction grants actors a social position which is perceived as being super-ordinate, identical or subordinated status (Pinnington et al, 2003). It is through this hierarchy of perceived status relations that actors make sense of leadership relationship dynamics and changes in the field.

The study showed that habitus is generated only during the relational process (Pizzorno, 1991: 218). Entities, either individuals or groups, are recognised and trusted as actors having identities and interests during the process of interaction (Pizzorno, 1991: 218). Therefore, entities in the relational leadership dynamics are only part of the story. The complete picture includes individuals, resources that are available and the field where interaction takes place. The only reality about entities before their involvement in interaction is that they exist (Pizzorno, 1991:

218). The process of recognition of the entity, either individual or group, happens only while interacting with other entities in a certain field (Pizzorno, 1991: 220). The creation of individuals' interests could happen within 'circles of recognition' where they get their identification or recognition (Pizzorno, 1991: 219; Emirbayer, 1997: 29). Individuals define their interests and goals according to the constraints and opportunities in reality (Jenkins, 2007: 71).

Actors in the interaction, either individuals or groups, create norms which define the conditions in the field. They also define each other according to acquired appearances as to the balance of power and relationships in the field. Actors while interacting create a pool of knowledge which is spread all over the field giving place to interpretations according to the social constructions of every single actor. Habitus is therefore an embodiment of the practical knowledge produced in the field (Pinnington et al., 2003). The habitus is embodied through the processes of interactions and creation of knowledge and acts of organising such as consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups. The embodiment takes shape over time through a learning process from the start of a group's work (Pinnington et al., 2003). Habitus is thus the outcome of collective history of the interactions converting all what actors do in the setting into something palpable (Jenkins, 2007: 80).

In a global multistakeholder group, habitus is developed by experience resulting from the steady interaction and production of knowledge in the field (Jenkins, 2007: 76). The habitus does not necessarily come from a conscious effort of actors having a clear target in the field (Jenkins, 2007: 76). It is the outcome of the interaction and the sensemaking of actors of their environment and the knowledge and relationships built up in the interaction (Jenkins, 2007: 76). As far as actors become accustomed to the dynamics governing the field or the setting, they continuously build up mental models of the social order. In the current study, they interpret frequent processes of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups as shifts in leadership relationships. The habitus is drawn as a set of dispositions in the field translating actors' sensemaking of how they relate to each other (Pinnington and Gray, 2007). It is therefore a melting pot where the conditions of the environment are taken into consideration and the inside dynamics are highlighted in the field of interaction (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977: 205). The habitus reflects the objective reality of the field in which it is constituted (Bourdieu, 1977: 54). It is the reflection

of the relationships within the field which are translated into knowledge and norms (Bourdieu, 1990a: 53).

Dispositions, which are an embodiment of the habitus into human beings, constitute the essence of the habitus (Bourdieu, 1977). Habitus is a social construction reflecting the conditions in which it is constituted (Bourdieu, 1977). As it is rooted in the body, habitus highlights the behaviour within the field and also make part of it (Bourdieu, 1977). Dispositions in the current study are the results of organising actions of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups (Bourdieu, 1977: 214). The outcome of those acts is a social construction of leadership relationships which show either a way of being or tendency towards the construction of new relationships or the disbandment of existing relationships (Bourdieu, 1977: 214).

9.5.5.2 Field and Strategising in the ISO 26000 WGSR

The ISO 26000 WGSR as a field according to Bourdieu has a structure and a distribution of capital (Pinnington et al., 2003). In the current study, field positions are occupied either by individuals, the ISO 26000 WGSR, stakeholder groups, country delegations, international organisations etc. (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). The current setting as field relates to the space where activities of the ISO 26000 WGSR take place either face-to-face or through electronic means such as email and teleconferencing. It also includes standards' development and social responsibility as fields of expertise. The field is not necessarily the venue of meetings of the ISO 26000 WGSR or of the delegated groups. It also encloses all settings where interaction resulting into organising activities related to the ISO 26000 WGSR takes place (Swartz, 2008). The field is therefore a platform for interaction of actors entailing specialist as well as functional structures (Bourdieu 1984; 1996).

Acts of organising in the field are not necessarily happening at the same place and time. The field is directly influenced by the stock of capital which is accumulated or reduced over time through leadership relationships in the setting. Leadership relationships are influenced by the available and emerging capital. Changes in the relationships and in the 'rules of the game' have a direct impact on leadership relationships (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu considered fields as being hierarchically organised (Bourdieu, 1983). Hierarchy in the current research is emphasised in the ISO 26000 WGSR as being a structured setting although it is informal and

does not follow traditional organisational frameworks, in addition to having a distribution of capital (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Prior, 2000).

The relationships in the field are balanced through capital and emphasised through the habitus. The structure in the field enclosing a certain distribution of capital engenders shifts in leadership relationships. The structure of the field and distribution of capital can change over time. Changes in the conditions in the field result in changes in the conditions of field actors and their respective social positions. Actors in the interaction, either individuals or groups, are therefore perceived as being in either dominating or dominated positions (Abott, 2001; Pinnington et al., 2003). This study has therefore confirmed that ‘some actors have more capital and so are dominant over those with less; others may have equal but different compositions of capital at their disposal which puts them in a different relationship to other actors and the field itself’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The distribution of capital in the ISO 26000 WGSR has contributed to the organising acts of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups. The organising acts have generated dispositions of leadership relationships which are perceived by actors in the interaction as being relations of domination (Abbott, 2001).

The ongoing interaction between the actors in the interaction and the relationships developed and the shifts in conditions of the ISO 26000 WGSR emphasise strategies at play in the field (Jenkins, 2007: 83). Strategising is a relational concept linking organising acts of consensus-building, legitimacy, delegation to groups and leadership relationships developed in the ISO 26000 WGSR as a field (Jenkins, 2007: 83). The current study has shown that what could be described as strategy in the setting is influenced by both dispositions of actors in the interaction and situations resulting from interaction within the field (Bourdieu, 1990a: 130). It could include some sort of rational calculation. Nevertheless, the rational calculation in strategising is adapted to the conditions in the field (Jenkins, 2007: 83). This means that strategising in this study is not as it has often been understood in the traditional management literature as being entitative, conscious, and calculative (Jenkins, 2007: 83).

The current study has shown that entities, either individuals or groups, do not always have fixed interests, goals and preferences. There are some fixed interests, goals and preferences which may remain unchanged with circumstances. Nevertheless, most actors’ interests, goals and preferences evolve according to the conditions of the interaction. Hence, the habitus evolves with

the environment where it interacts (Wacquant, 1989: 43). Furthermore, the habitus adjusts to the field according to its interests and other characteristics which find favourable conditions for remaining unaltered. There are some inflexible characteristics such as norms and beliefs which may be driving individuals (Emirbayer, 1997). Nevertheless, those norms and beliefs are only part of what creates action in a field. The unit of analysis in the field is the outcome of the relational processes resulting from the interaction of different entities.

Rational choice theory and moral action fail to comprehensively explain the construction of action as a result of the interaction of different entities. Entities' interests, goals, identities and other characteristics become altered during the interaction (Emirbayer, 1997). Actually, rational choice theory, by allocating special characteristics to entities as self-acting, impedes the study of the dynamics of actions' processes entailing the relationship between entities and between entities and their environment (Dewey and Bentley, 1949: 108). Elsewhere, the interaction approach fails to uncover the dynamics lying within somewhat over-reified phenomena such as concepts of groups and cultures. The study has shown that entities, being individuals, society or even structures, are defined according to the field in which they are embedded and not as separate substances (Dewey and Bentley, 1949: 112; Foucault, 1979: 29; Emirbayer, 1997: 287). Stakeholder groups in a global multistakeholder group play leadership roles through the field interactions amongst themselves. Leadership discourse is generated whenever individual members socially construct images and stories about those leadership relationships.

9.5.5.3 Capital and Practice in the ISO 26000 WGSR

The stock of capital in the field engenders relationships of hierarchy and domination and thus favours the resurgence of a privileged practice. Bourdieu divided capital into two major symbolic forms: 'economic' and 'cultural' (Pinnington et al., 2003). Capital in this study is considered as 'stakeholder' or 'country' membership, resources available through stakeholders, the sense of legitimacy given to members of stakeholder groups, the sense of belonging to international organisations and countries in addition to power resources such as differences in experience in standard development, negotiation and reputation. As in habitus, capital is embodied in the process of construction of reality (Bourdieu, 1986: 244).

Practice in the ISO 26000 WGSR is the outcome of interaction of different individuals and groups in the field (Jenkins, 2007: 74). Practice is the outcome of continuous interaction and is not a consciously planned process (Jenkins, 2007: 76). Actors in the interaction's dispositions contribute to practice in the field as part of a routine process (Jenkins, 2007: 77). Practice is recognised as the creation of norms, knowledge and text contributing to organising acts and therefore to leadership relationships. It is the outcome of the intersection between the habitus and its dispositions, which is the result of the interaction between individuals and groups in the setting, and the constraints, demands and opportunities of the social field in addition to capital positions (Bourdieu, 1977; Swartz, 2008: 50). That interaction based on the stock of capital gives place to a recreation and sustainment of relationships of domination and hierarchy among individuals groups and which is perceived as leadership (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

The power resources are not only material as being related to wealth and technological development. They are also related to networking and lobbying resources available for them inside and outside the field. In the current setting, it is clear that different forms of capital are available and are used to gain strategic positions. Different forms of capital are converted into other forms in order to respond to the needs of consensus-building and legitimacy in the field (Bourdieu, 1984: 75). Economic and social capitals are converted into cultural capital to enable actors to strategise in the field. Cultural capital is also strategically used as symbolic capital with the use of expertise and experience of actors and groups. Symbolic capital encloses a set of resources which distinguishes actors in the field according to their reputation, image and prestige (Bourdieu, 1984). Symbolic capital has served in the ISO 26000 WGSR to enable some actors to gain positions and delegitimising others. It therefore played a crucial role in the leadership dynamics of the group.

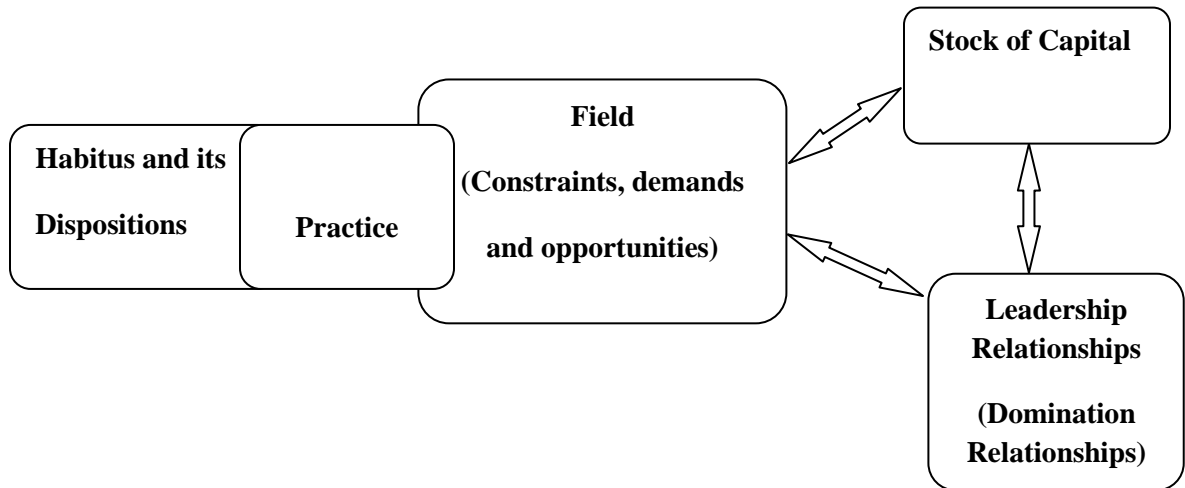


Figure 5: Practice as an Intersection between Habitus and Field

Norms and knowledge produced by individuals and groups are therefore informed by the constraints and opportunities in the ISO 26000 WGSR (Pinnington et al., 2003). This contributes to the creation of new dispositions in the field which recreate domination relationships and therefore leadership relationships. The field here, as being the ISO 26000 WGSR, is constrained by the need for consensus-building and legitimating among the different stakeholder groups. Norms' generation evolves with the continuous process of adjustment in the ISO 26000 WGSR between individuals and groups and their habitus on one side and the organising acts of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups on the other side (Bourdieu, 1977). As for the field, practice as being norms and knowledge produced is both a resource and a constraint for social order in the ISO 26000 WGSR (Jenkins, 2007: 69). Production of norms and knowledge has been perceived as resources as well as constraints for processes of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups.

The production of norms and knowledge in the ISO 26000 WGSR was taking place in different periods of time and in different places following the field of interaction (Jenkins, 2007: 69). Norms and knowledge are not only the result of the intersection of the habitus, resulting from the interaction among actors, and the field but are also a reflection of the demands, constraints and opportunities in the field (Jenkin, 2007: 82). The current study has also shown that norms and knowledge are also generated with experience and accumulation (Jenkins, 2007: 70). There were

more compromises in the latter than in the earlier stages of the ISO 26000 process; obviously resulting from the time spent within the process as a whole.

Power as a relational concept is directly related to the capital actors have in the interaction. Power highlights the positions actors occupy within the relationships in the group (Knoke, 1990). Having enough resources or capital available in the group enables actors to use a wide array of social force in their interaction (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 220). Indeed, power in the field shows a struggle for the legitimation of capital (Swartz, 2008). Having enough or less capital available for consensus-building in the ISO 26000 WGSR directly influenced the kind of leadership relationships developed. Power in the current research is understood as a relational phenomenon resulting from the interaction (Emirbayer, 1997: 292). It is not clear whether actors playing leading roles in the setting would have had such influence if they were working in different situations.

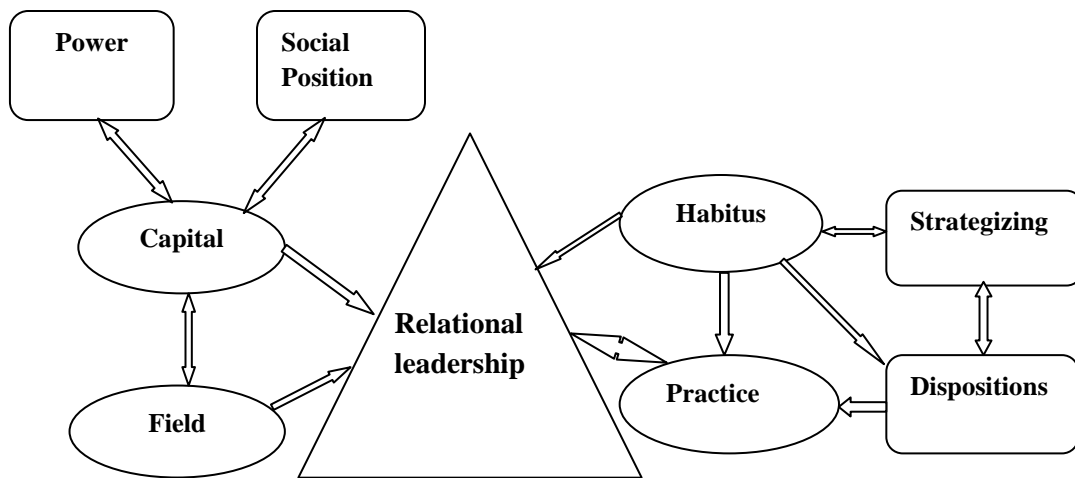


Figure 6: Relational Leadership Explained through Bourdieu's Concepts

Cultural capital encloses all kinds of experience and knowledge by experts and groups in the ISO 26000 WGSR. It allows them to be distinguished from other experts and groups (Bourdieu 1984: 69). Actors in the interaction use their perceptions of differences in cultural capital and their contribution to leadership relationships in the field. It entails all power resources used by actors in the interaction to strengthen their own positions and weaken positions of others in addition to

imposing their understanding of reality as the most legitimate (Swartz, 2008). Economic and social conditions of actors in the interaction play an important role in their cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984: 75). Actors from developed countries are likely to have more power resources in their struggle in the field. Those from developing countries have less power resources. They are therefore likely to play more outsider roles rather than strategic roles in the process.

Actors in the interaction internalise opportunities and constraints governing the field to unconsciously and more efficiently reach consensus and thus enact a social order. This process of accumulation of experience resulting from time spent together is evidently a reflection of leadership dynamics constructing the social order at any time in the process (Bourdieu, 1990a). Norms and knowledge in the ISO 26000 WGSR emerge according to the conditions of social order in the field (Bourdieu, 1990a: 50). They are not produced according to a pre-given agenda but according to the consensus reached and the degree of legitimation of acts, procedures and status of individuals and groups. Norms and knowledge produced in the ISO 26000 WGSR are therefore the outcome of a learning process which had been taking place for many years (Bourdieu, 1990a).

Capital has obviously been used in the ISO 26000 WGSR as a tool for legitimating domination (Swartz, 2008). Social capital in the ISO 26000 WGSR encloses all resources enabling actors in the interaction to build leadership relationships and legitimise their positions and their interaction with others (Bourdieu, 1986). This capital could include being member of a stakeholder group, a delegated group or a drafting team. Membership as a social capital entitles actors to special positions which have direct influence on leadership relationships. At the same time, disbandment of leadership relationships is the sign of the loss of certain social capital for some actors.

9.5.6 Model of Relational Leadership in a Global Multistakeholder Group

Relational leadership focuses on leadership as a process (Hosking, 1988). The focus is more on acts which contribute to the structuring of interactions and relationships. In this study, the acts of legitimacy and consensus-building and delegation to groups contribute to the structuring of leadership relationships. Leadership processes are understood as an outcome of those acts. Acts of legitimacy, consensus-building and delegation to groups are a reflection of a social order achieved at a certain time. The values and interests of the social order highlight the kind of

leadership relationships and processes perceived significant at a certain time in the setting. Leadership relationships and dispositions change according to the social order in place.

A global multistakeholder group could be considered as a system of interacting individuals and groups. Leadership is a reflection of a context of leadership relationships sustained through interactions among members (Sayles, 1964). A multistakeholder group is not held together by its policies which are mostly informal but as a result of the process of interactions of its members. The interactions which are substantiated through consensus, legitimacy and delegation to groups keep a balance within the group and prevent it from disbanding. Leadership is not solely about individuals interacting with each other but also the creation and maintenance of a shared sense of responsibility and belonging among members of the group (Murell, 1997). The multistakeholder nature of the working group makes it more likely to see phenomena of group leadership. For reasons of stakeholder balance, the processes do not allow single individuals to appear as stars without them showing due consideration of others around them. The process of leadership is often made up of the interaction of different individuals and groups constructing the leadership image.

Relational leadership is about leadership aspects which could be observed or perceived at any time and at all levels of an organisation. In the case of multistakeholder groups, leadership could be sensed at any level (Hunt and Dodge, 2000). There are different aspects of influence which could be considered as leadership; there are aspects of leadership in consensus-building in claiming legitimacy and bringing in new ideas to break up the status quo. There are also other leadership aspects of resistance, destruction and opposition. Leadership is perceived to be played by individuals, stakeholder groups, countries, international organisations, linguistic groups, regional groups of countries, national mirror committees and other groups of interest.

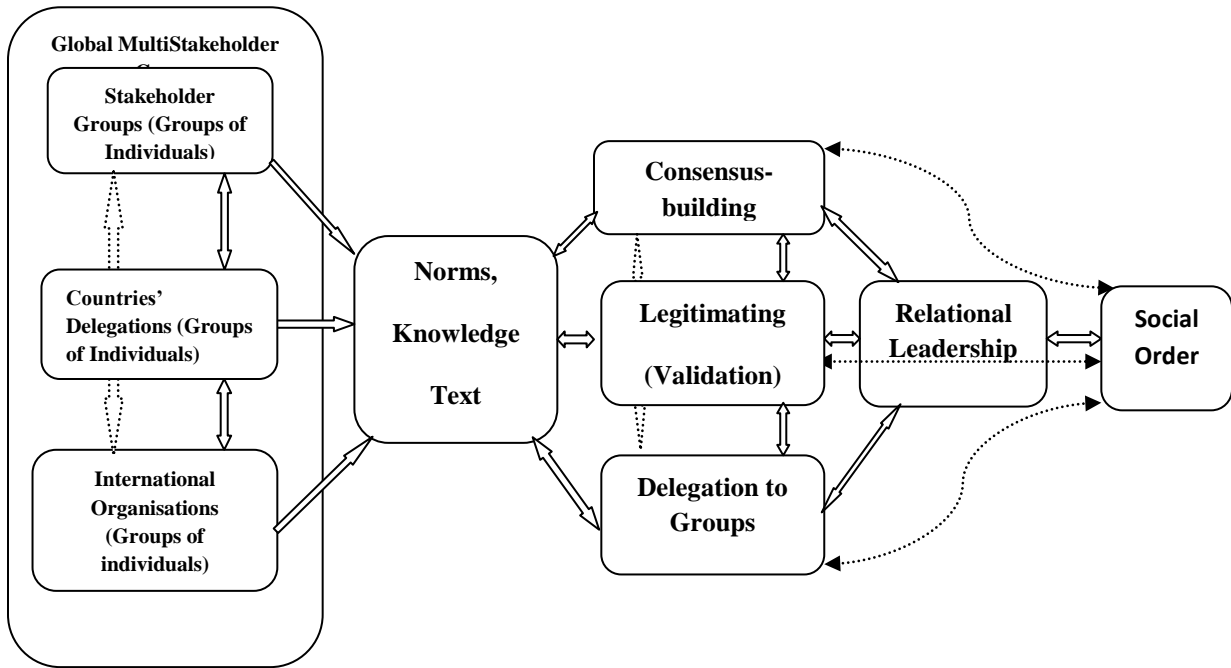


Figure 7: Relational Leadership in a Global Multistakeholder Group

Leadership is not necessarily played where the main actors in the working group and other sub-groups interact but also in all other levels of the setting. Similarly, leadership roles of support or resistance from a stakeholder group have an impact on the outcome. There may be some individuals who play leading roles in those organisations or sub-organisations. However, what members of the group make sense of in those cases is the group as a leader in either directions; positive or negative. Therefore, relational leadership in a multistakeholder group explores the relational dynamics of leadership and organising in a group made up of different stakeholder groups. Leadership occurs at all levels and directions including at group and shared level.

The diagram above illustrates the main findings from the current research. The analysis of relationships through Bourdieu's concepts helped conceptualise the leadership relationships in the ISO 26000 WGSR. Interaction among actors, either individuals or groups, contributes to the generation of norms and knowledge. This contributes to the organising acts of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups. Those organising acts help actors make sense of the construction and disbandment of leadership relationships in the setting. Leadership relationships socially constructed are a reflection of social order at a certain period of time.

9.6 Summary of Chapter

The current research has shown that the stability of social order, which is the leadership relational processes in this study, requires consensus and is attributed to legitimacy, consensus-building and delegation to groups. There is a process of interdependence between processes of consensus-building and legitimacy and delegation to groups. Leadership as a socially constructed social order would be maintained as far as the conditions of consensus-building and legitimacy are met. Otherwise, the current social order, or leadership construction, would give place to a new social order.

The study has also shown that norms play a crucial role in maintaining and destabilising a global multistakeholder group. Norms in this group are not only pre-set but also are continuously emerging from the interaction. Social order is therefore reached either following pre-set or emerging norms. It is not necessary that individuals and groups contributing to reach the temporary social order should share the same values and interests. The study also showed that in the absence of enforcement mechanisms of norms, consensus-building processes can be generated for the same issues. Time constraints are also found to be used as norms for pressing for consensus, legitimacy, delegation to groups and social order in general.

The study also showed that ambiguity is strategically used generating leadership processes and social order. Questions have also been strategically used either to clarify an ambiguity or to highlight a strong position or also to suggest a hint for reaching social order. Sensemaking is quite frequent in such a multistakeholder process. The study also showed that social order could be reached more effectively by coercion than through voluntary consensus. Threats and warnings are used to enforce coerced consensus and legitimation. Irony has also been used in conflict situations to bully individuals and groups. In this context, language has been used in order to include or exclude individuals or groups from playing roles in consensus-building or within delegated groups. Language has actually been used as a tool of legitimation of individuals and groups and their acts and activities. The study showed that consensus is not only reached through interaction of individuals but also through interaction of sets of text. In addition, the emotions of team members have an impact on team's climate and effectiveness.

The current study has confirmed that legitimation is a mechanism which mediates between the structure of groups and actions of individuals. Legitimation concerns acts, persons, roles, rules and structure of relations and groups. Leadership as social order is maintained or modified through legitimacy yielding from consensus based on norms, power or both. The study has also highlighted the special influence of countries and international organisations in the global multistakeholder process through their delegates and documents. Financial means have proved to be crucial in influencing the participation of individuals and organisations in the ISO 26000 WGSR. The lack of funding prevented them from contributing to text and therefore had an impact on the legitimacy of the process and of text. Those legitimation processes obviously entail leadership relational dynamics. Legitimacy as validation involving validation of norms, beliefs, acts and procedures entail validation or disqualification of leadership processes.

This study also showed the limits of legitimacy which could be claimed by a global multistakeholder group. The nature of influence by some countries, international organisations, individuals or language groups makes it that the group could not be described as purely multistakeholder. The representativeness of delegates and their mandate also limit the multistakeholder nature of the group and therefore the legitimacy of its outcome. Some individuals or groups would attempt to strengthen their legitimacy by referring to scientific realm or by citing individuals or groups' initiatives. Among the limits of legitimacy of text produced is also the way comments by the ISO 26000 WGSR members are analysed and interpreted.

This study showed that delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group is conditional on the approval of the delegating group. The processes of delegation to groups involve processes of consensus, legitimation and leadership. There are many reasons for delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group including resolution of conflicts and saving time in reaching consensus. Delegated groups in global multistakeholder are generally stakeholder balanced. Some individuals and groups would push towards delegation to smaller groups where they can exert more influence than in larger groups. Delegation to groups without a clear mandate allows some members and the groups they represent to exert greater influence. It would also enable the delegated group to creating norms and legitimising and delegitimising text and entities. The study has also shown that there is a positive relationship between delegation to groups and organisational outcome.

In this study, leadership is socially constructed and distributed within the multistakeholder group. The processes of legitimacy, consensus-building and delegation to groups ensure the construction and distribution of knowledge according to leadership positions. The approval and disapproval of text involves the construction and disbandment of leadership relationships. The process of conversation and negotiation of text involves the negotiation of leadership positions. Leadership relationships are a social construction of collectively constructed reality. Leadership processes are considered as an embodiment of reality. The study also showed a positive relationship between the maturity of relationships in the group and organisational outcome. This study has also confirmed that leadership happens at all levels of the organisation and not only at the managerial level.

The current study has also attempted to develop a model of relational leadership in a global multistakeholder group. The focus is on organising acts and activities that contribute to the social construction of leadership relationships. The acts of organising are a reflection of social order and also of leadership relationships at a specific moment in time. Therefore, leadership relationships and dispositions change according to the social order in place. Leadership processes are sustained and disbanded through interaction resulting in norms. Interaction is substantiated through consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups.

Leadership is socially constructed in a global multistakeholder group more as group leadership than leadership of individuals. Leadership could be perceived at all levels within and outside the multistakeholder setting. The processes of leadership influence could come from actors from within or outside the setting. Those actors could be individuals or organisations including country governments. Although recognising leadership as a relational process is no easy task, the current study attempted to approach it through changes in the temporary social order within organising acts and activities of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

10.1 Introduction to Chapter

This research aims at exploring relational processes through which leadership is constructed and disbanded in the ISO 26000 WGSR. As sub-questions, the research aimed at finding out the organising acts and activities contributing to the emergence, preservation and disbandment of leadership in the ISO 26000 WGSR. It also attempted to investigate how leadership relationships are mediated by consensus-building, legitimacy, and delegation to groups within the ISO 26000 WGSR. A four years long participant observation data collection within the ISO 26000 WGSR using diaries helped further shed light on the research questions. Other sources such as emails and ISO 26000 WGSR official documents completed the gaps in data collection from field notes. The study also used Bourdieu's relational concepts of habitus, capital, field and practice as a theoretical lens in investigating leadership relational processes.

The study had different empirical and theoretical findings which would enrich the field of relational leadership and its organising processes in a global multistakeholder group. This study has considered leadership as a relational process socially constructed through acts of organising. The study does not reject the focus on organisations as 'organised' sets of activities or structures but adopts a different perspective at organisational phenomena. The current study is proposed to complement the other perspective by looking at different angles and by using different or alternative methodologies. The current study looked at processes that required more time and interaction opportunities using grounded theory.

I focused on leadership as a process and also on leadership as organising or kind of organising activity (Hosking, 1988: 147). Indeed the skills of organising are the skills of leadership. Organising happens thanks to the contribution of individuals and groups interacting to produce outcomes. Therefore, leadership related to acts of organising is more about the processes contributing to those acts of organising than about the actors themselves. The concepts of consensus, legitimacy and delegation to groups served as means of stabilising and reconciling differences and achieving social order in general. Legitimacy in this context appears to be as a creative collective work and co-construction of norms and values. The setting is a place of encounter for people and organisations from different national, cultural and ideological

backgrounds. Together, they attempt to build up a common legitimacy either for the functioning of the group or its outcome.

This chapter outlines this thesis' scholarly and professional contributions to knowledge. It will also expand on the challenges and limits of this research. Further on, this chapter will give some propositions of areas which may need more researching. Furthermore, it will suggest some recommendations which could help better conduct such studies in the future. The chapter is also giving some practical recommendations about acts of organising related to global multistakeholder groups.

10.2 Contribution to Knowledge

This study offers several substantial contributions to knowledge in both professional and theoretical fields. The theoretical contribution of the thesis has many facets. It includes contribution to methodology as well as to the fields of leadership, consensus-building, legitimacy and also an original contribution about delegation to groups in global multistakeholder groups. Professional contribution is about highlighting some of the dynamics related to global multistakeholder groups. It is likely that in response to the findings of this study that an increased number of organisations will attempt involving different stakeholders in their traditional activities.

The current study can be considered as having significantly contributed to organisational research. The main contribution of this research is about studying relational leadership in a global multistakeholder setting which has not been done before. The study has also contributed in further enriching approaches to the study of leadership as a process. Leadership adopted as organising is found to be influenced by processes of consensus-building, legitimacy and delegation to groups. The study thereby fills a gap in the leadership literature insofar as there is no substantial body of academic literature on leadership processes within an informal global multistakeholder setting. There are scarce studies about the processes of disbandment or collapse of leadership, about consensus-building and delegation to groups within global multistakeholder groups.

This research demonstrates the possibility of combining the psychological perspective of leadership with the sociological perspective of Bourdieu's sociology. It also contributes to the

debate on studying leadership as a trait of individuals or dyads versus studying leadership as a process of organising. In this study leadership can be a property of a group and could take place in different directions. The thesis also considers leadership from a wider perspective beyond the manager-subordinate relationship. It has investigated the communication processes rather than the attributes or behaviours of individual leaders. Therefore, it has focused on the collective dynamic rather than the individual dynamic adopted in most leadership studies.

The relational perspective on leadership views leadership as a process of social construction. It is through acts and activities in a setting that we understand how leadership influence happens. Thus, leadership is identified wherever there is a modified form of status and the emergence of a different social order, attitudes and goals. In the current study, the leadership relationship is not predefined; it is emerging. The dynamics of group leadership were also obvious in this process. Some stakeholder groups, ad hoc drafting groups, countries, or international organisations, shaped the orientation of the whole ISO 26000 WGSR. Theoretically, each stakeholder category had equal status compared to others. However, some stakeholder groups' standpoints and advocacy were given greater consideration than others.

Actually, the global multistakeholder group is not only about stakeholder groups but also about stakeholder group 'leaders'. The main contributions to the development of the standards are coming from leader individuals and organisations. The rest of the group may be contributing by commenting or lobbying for one direction or the other. However their influence seems to be less considerable than the influence of the leading individuals and organisations in the process. The main learning at this level is that those who have greater influence are those who draft text followed by those who comment and actively lobby for their versions of text. There is also space to mention that some actors in the interaction naturally play leading roles by actively contributing to text. Some others impose themselves on the group although their contribution is limited.

One of the main contributions of this research is also that leadership at the end of the day within those multistakeholder groups is assured through the medium of the English language. Experts with good English language skills succeed in communicating their points of view. Actually, when text is drafted by a small group of people and especially agreed upon by different stakeholders within small delegated groups, it would be very difficult to change it once it goes

back to the larger group. In general, countries or organisations which are not represented within the small delegated drafting teams find it difficult to channel their comments and change the text. Even within the small delegated drafting teams, non-native English-speakers find it difficult to convince others about their performance because every time they come to drafting or to assess the quality of a written text, text written by non-English native speakers is delegitimised as not being written in ‘plain English’.

The current thesis also contributed to literature on consensus-building in global multistakeholder groups. It has shown that consensus-building in the ISO 26000 WGSR is rather a sort of forced way forward within a decision-making process than consensus-building. It can also be defined as a decision-making process rather than a process of progression towards agreement and consensus. It is also found to be slightly different from consensus-building in a professional group. Within this group, the multistakeholders’ characters vary in terms of cultural, linguistic, and geographical identities and roots. Consensus-building is understood to be a relational process of sensemaking and one which does not always take place at the same time and in the same place. Emotions and language have also the potential to play a role in leadership in a multistakeholder group at an international level.

The current thesis has also contributed to the available literature on legitimacy in a global multistakeholder group. The current study has confirmed that legitimation is a mechanism which mediates between the structure of groups and actions of individuals. Legitimation concerns acts, persons, roles, rules and structure of relations and groups. The approval and disapproval of text involves the construction and disbandment of leadership relationships. Nevertheless, among the limits of legitimacy of text produced is also the way comments by the ISO 26000 WGSR members are analysed and interpreted. The processes of leadership influence could come from actors from within or outside the setting. Validation as a process of legitimacy is also found to be significant in the construction or disbandment of leadership relational processes. The current study has also highlighted the special influence of countries and international organisations in the global multistakeholder process through their delegates and documents. Financial capacity was also found to be a significant contributor to legitimacy in the process.

Delegation to groups is among the considerable contributions of this research. Most of studies on delegation are about delegation from an individual to another individual or a dyad of individuals

working together in a hierarchical context. Delegation in the current study is about delegation as a relational process from one group to another group. The study has shown that delegation within a global multistakeholder group is rarely about delegation to an individual but to a group. Delegation to groups in a global multistakeholder group is generally conditional. The outcome of the delegated group may need to be validated by the delegating group. The delegated groups also need to be balanced in terms of stakeholders represented in the delegating group. The study has also shown that there is a positive relationship between delegation to groups and organisational outcome. Goal congruence between delegated group members is not a requirement for the delegated group to produce an outcome. However, the quality of the outcome would be mediated by the consensus within the delegated group.

The current research has also had a contribution to methodology. The study managed to use ethnographic research to ground theory on relational leadership. It was difficult to focus on leadership as an emerging phenomena and that is reflected through organising acts. The study also managed to combine the leadership psychological perspective with Bourdieu's relational sociology. The study managed to use Bourdieu's three main concepts of habitus, capital and field together in the same study to unveil leadership processes. The current study also raised the issue of visa or entry clearance as a barrier for access. It is likely that most of the access issues mentioned in the literature have been written by developed countries scholars who, in general do not need to obtain a visa for short-term visits to many countries across the world. I assume that a considerable number of researchers from developing countries fail to collect data or attend academic settings in different countries due to difficulties relating to visa requirements. Funding and my status as a participant were also found to be barriers to access.

The current study could also be considered as a contribution to the professional literature on global multistakeholder groups. The dynamics detailed in the thesis will help international organisations seeking to pursue a multistakeholder model for part or all of their projects; planning them carefully to overcome shortcomings. Combining groups involving stakeholder groups with national and transnational affiliations with governments and other interest groups needs a careful analysis of the weight every group of interest might have on the outcome. They will also learn from the confusion which can result from the multiple allegiances of participants and their impact on the legitimacy of the group and the outcome of its work. There is also an

important point from the research for learning more about the need for enforcement mechanisms of consensus reached.

10.3 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

This research has been the outcome of a complete participant observation within the ISO 26000 WGSR for more than four years. It is obvious that such ethnographic studies although they may be well designed and professionally conducted inevitably they do have limitations. Among the well-known limitations of such ethnographic studies, in addition to those outlined in section 4.6.2 of this thesis is the difficulty of generalisation of theories grounded from the ethnographic field. I recognise that the reality shown in this research may be just one reality among others. My active participation in the process and the development of my working and social relationships with actors in the interaction has definitely had an impact on my objectivity as a researcher. Nevertheless, I tried to be conscious about my subjectivity as a person and as a participant during all of the research stages and have done my best to highlight these limitations in the thesis.

The methodology used in this study also has limitations. For example, the approach of counting frequencies of sub-categories at the data analysis stage definitely relatively highlights some issues and overlooks others. Nevertheless, I had to make choices and follow one way and not the other. I also chose not to use software in encoding data for data analysis which could be considered by some as a limitation for this qualitative study. Actually, the setting and nature of data collected in the current study made it difficult to use software while keeping the meaning and context of field notes. Furthermore, the software itself has some limitations in the sense that it is the researcher, as a human being, who provides the software with data to be processed. Some of the limitations related to this study could be related to the difficulty of studying relational leadership processes. It is actually not an easy task to measure or compare relational leadership as such as it is not about individual traits and characteristics that could be compared. Therefore, writing up about relational leadership should not give the impression of certainty. I was aware of the issue and tried to develop theory with an open mind towards other perspectives and approaches.

The current study has raised many issues which could be further researched. For example, relational leadership in global multistakeholder groups could be studied in a different setting and

then have the results compared with the current study. Some studies could focus on the value and potential of developing standards in global multistakeholder groups compared to other settings of standards' development. This type of study could also compare the relational dynamics produced in the two types of settings. There is also possibility of further study of leadership in social responsibility. Another issue of leadership relates the asymmetry of information in consensus-building and its impact on leadership processes. From my observation in the group, there were some groups and individuals who had crucial new information to contribute more so than did others. Thus, it helped them dominate consensus than those who did not have that specific information. There could also be further research on sensemaking and relational leadership.

Some strong points about the conduct of this study include the fact that I was part of the process before and after the end of the research and my access to the field was interrupted only for short periods due to visa issues. Although the ISO 26000 standard was published in November 2010, I am still part of the process as member of the Post Publication Organisation. He intends to further research the process looking at leadership and other organisational phenomena in the process. The absence of access problems for me facilitated the collection of a relatively big amount of raw data which took me a long time for processing, developing and analysing. Participant observation still remains a pertinent method for understanding relational leadership processes in a similar complex setting. There are many other issues which could be further studied such as delegation to groups in other settings and its relationship with leadership. Future studies could also look at the impact of adjusting text produced to English language requirements. Another issue is about the influence of English native speakers' members of such groups on the orientation of text produced.

10.4 Recommendations

Among the positive aspects of the current study is that it has both practical and theoretical findings. It is therefore possible to make professional as well as theoretical recommendations. Among the recommendations, the global multistakeholder group could set specific enforcement mechanisms of compromise or consensus reached. This would save time and reduce tension that could result from reopening closed debates. The group could also informally and as early as possible negotiate with potential destabilising groups, either stakeholders or countries or other

organisations. This would pre-empt cases of threats to the process as a whole. IDTF took for granted that its multistakeholder nature would legitimise its decisions and actions. Therefore, the group expected that all its decisions would be accepted as a result of a multistakeholder process. However, the group should have realized the impact of their decisions and consensus on some influential countries and organisations particularly those not represented in the delegated groups. It should have noticed the cultural ways of communication of far eastern countries such as China which are different from those of western countries such as the USA. USA has been openly lobbying for its interests within the group. In contrast, China has been quiet until the CD voting stage when they started a worldwide campaign against the document. They kept on their campaigning activities till the end of the process. At the end, they voted for the final document after getting a minimum of their expectations.

The group could also keep eye on stakeholder balance and the representation of different countries with different cultural and development backgrounds from the start of the group. Diversity of representation should be taken in the general groups as well as drafting teams. This should be reinforced with options for funding for groups or individuals unable to contribute because of financial reasons. Those simple steps could strengthen the legitimacy of the group and prevent legitimacy claims related to diversity or funding. Diversity should also be monitored in the mirror committees, or national committees of the group, as early as possible. It is obvious that an international group or organisation cannot oblige a country to follow certain rules. Nevertheless, it is always possible to use a package of rewards and incentives to ensure the balance.

The group should also set norms about dealing with comments from group members. This should consider the big influence of some organisations which do not make part of the stakeholder groups. Some organisations generally have more influence and produce more strong comments than stakeholders or countries. Those organisations do not necessarily have proportionately the due legitimacy for the influence they exert. In case they have the due legitimacy, they may play a duplicated role played by country representatives from stakeholder groups. I would suggest in the future having seven stakeholder groups instead of six. The seventh stakeholder group could be for international organisations. This stakeholder group could submit separate or consensus comments in the early stages of an ISO global multistakeholder group for example. In the

subsequent stages where comments are submitted by national delegations, international organisations could submit consensus comments for an entity called ‘International Organisations’.

Another recommendation relates to issues which are not settled in some meetings in a convincing way in a certain moment of time. They will be certainly raised again in comments and the debate about them would be reopened again. At some stage, reopening the debate was about to jeopardise the process. For example, China was against the annex on initiatives in Santiago and they said that they would bring that issue again if it was not sorted out. However, the leadership of the group preferred to go forward without taking their threat into consideration and without breaking ice and negotiating with them as if they could have done it with the USA or any European country. After the CD was published, China conducted an international campaign to persuade countries voting against the CD. The annex was one of the issues that made them reject the CD. The group should have tried to reach a consensus with China before going forward. However, again the cultural issues may have played here. The Western leaders of the group had difficulty accepting or willing to compromise with the ‘different and not fluent in English China’.

From my observations, the working group gave more attention to stakeholder groups only in early stages of the process where most of the work was built up following a proper ‘multistakeholder’ process. The working group tried keeping the same procedure as for other ISO technical groups at later stages after a CD gave full responsibility to national interest. This caused a clash among the stakeholder categories represented who claimed the process as being multistakeholder instead of nationally based. In actual fact, there was a task group 3 which was in charge of procedures for the working group. This task group should have had a forward thinking about the future scenarios in the working group and pre-empted it from the confusion created at later stages.

In practice, if a country or organisation would like to influence a similar process, it has to send highly specialist experts with very good English language skills. Moreover, they have to set up a strong team to review text in the country from stakeholders but also from experts which would recognise and give opinion on the likely contentious issues. Another important issue for greater participation is to be represented within small drafting groups. The representatives within

drafting teams should be excellent in English. Because even if the person is speaking English, they can be told that the text they produced is not in ‘plain English’.

It looks also like that countries and organisations that submit comments on text have more the ability to defend their positions. Therefore, submitting comments on any part of text is one of the key factors, among others, to have an influence on the process. In the working group meetings, every time the chairs of the group did not like the comments of any member, they asked them if they had submitted comments on that issue. The comments which should be submitted should not only be about contentious issues but also about concept/ definition issues. In addition to that, the country or organisation should check before coming to the meetings of the working group that their comments have been considered and complain in case they are not. They should also send representatives to be present during the working group meetings and work in all small groups and make sure their comments are integrated into text.

A final recommendation relates to the ethnographic study of global multistakeholder groups. I suggest that the chairs of the group from the beginning encourage some researcher participants collect field notes about the process. This could help shed light on different organisational aspects. That could be used for general research as well as for the development of the mechanisms governing those kinds of groups. Participant observation by insiders seems to be the best way to study such processes. The use of interviews or questionnaires by external researchers is unlikely to uncover the dynamics within those highly politicised processes.

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